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# CHINA, JAPAN, AND KOREA

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*B. T. Prideaux*] [*Frontispiece*

DAWN ON THE CHIENTANG RIVER, CHEKIANG.

"The moving homes of men whose lives are as the lives of their forefathers."

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# CHINA
# JAPAN AND KOREA

BY

J. O. P. BLAND

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1921

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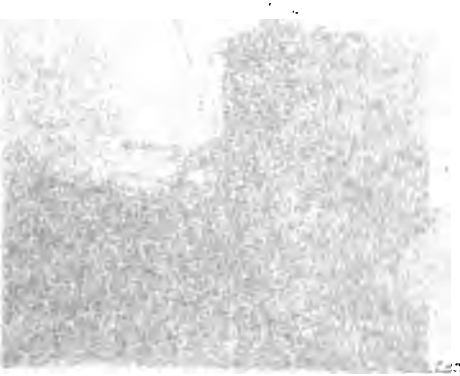

*Frontispiece*

CHIENTANG RIVER, CHEKIANG.

"... of men whose lives are as the lives of their forefathers."

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BY

J. O. P. BLAND

*ILLUSTRATED*

NEW YORK
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1921

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*The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government. All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organise faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force; to put, in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party, often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community. . . . However combinations or associations of the above description may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterward the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.*—From Washington's Farewell Address.

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# PART I

## A POLITICAL SURVEY

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTORY

In a book published at the end of 1912,[1] the year of the abdication of the Manchu dynasty and the establishment of the Chinese Republic, I endeavoured to trace the causes, and to predict some of the results, of that upheaval. Before proceeding to discuss the history of the eight years which have elapsed since that book was written, I propose to revert briefly to some of the views which it expressed and to some of the opinions which it evoked, in China and abroad. Eight years are all too brief a space of time in the life of a nation to afford any conclusive evidence as to the direction of its political evolution; nevertheless, the course of events since 1912, and the actual position of affairs at Peking and in the provinces afford, I think, good ground for certain useful conclusions in regard to questions upon which opinion has widely differed, and still differs, in England and America.

Of these, the most important is, firstly, the general question of the fitness of the Chinese people for self-government; and, secondly, the question of Young China's aspirations and achievements in the organisation and working of representative institutions.

I do not propose to recapitulate here the causes of the Chinese revolution of 1911–12; the truth is now generally recognised, I believe, that these causes were fundamentally economic rather than political, and that, until the social system of the Chinese people shall have been modified by process of education, the acute pressure of population upon means of subsistence, which results

[1] *Recent Events and Present Policies in China.*



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from that system, must continue to be an ever-recurring source of unrest and strife. It is also generally recognised that under these conditions, no matter what names and shapes authority may assume, the Chinese can never hope to be quietly and orderly governed, unless and until the Central Government is strong enough to keep in check, by force, the ever-latent elements of disorder. All over the world, and most noticeably since the War, men are being led to perceive that the increasing pressure of population upon the food resources of the planet, constitutes civilisation's gravest problem and the paramount cause of world unrest. In China, the social fabric is, comparatively speaking, so simple, that the connection between cause and effect is swift and unmistakable when pestilence or famine decimate whole provinces. A few observers there are who, while admitting the severity of the economic pressure which has made Chinese history for centuries a series of cataclysms, still profess to believe that it may be relieved by expedients, such as emigration, the scientific development of mines, or the improvement of agriculture. But, generally speaking, the truth appears to be realised that, even if it were possible to obtain temporary alleviation by any or all of these means, the fundamental problem would still remain unsolved, the application of the law of population being merely deferred, and its results aggravated, by such expedients, unless accompanied by a reduction of the birth-rate.

The views which I ventured to put forward in 1912 concerning the permanent causes of unrest, and incidentally of the revolution, in China, naturally appealed with greater force to Europeans there resident than to observers and students of Chinese affairs at a distance. Many of the latter, unfortunately, are by temperament or vocation disposed to believe in the efficacy of political formulæ or religious beliefs to relieve society of the penalties of its collective ignorance or collective folly, and attach small importance to economics. For a certain

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very prevalent class of rhapsodists and idealists, the experience of a thousand yesterdays is always as nought compared with to-morrow's vision of the Promised Land. Show them, by weight of indisputable evidence gathered from trustworthy sources, that in the East no magic virtue of regeneration proceeds from the blessed words "Democracy" and "Republic," prove to them that the so-called Parliamentarians have reduced the political status of China to the level of San Domingo, they will denounce you as a reactionary, urge you to have more faith, and proceed to proclaim with increased fervour the application of their infallible panaceas.

Writing in 1912, while the Republic was still in the making, I observed that no stable form of government could possibly be evolved from the materials at Young China's disposal. The reasons for this belief were given, as follows :—

"Remembering the ancestry and genesis of Young China, being personally acquainted with many of its leading spirits, having followed its operations and activities in every province from the beginning of the present revolution, I am compelled to the conviction that salvation from this quarter is impossible, not only because Young China itself is unregenerate and undisciplined, but because its ideals and projects of government involve the creation of a new social and political structure utterly unsuited to the character and traditions of the race; because it is contrary to all experience that a people cut off from its deep-rooted beliefs and habits of life should develop and retain a vigorous national consciousness."

Another passage summarised the actual position created by the collapse of the Manchu Government's authority, as follows :—

"The army, uncontrolled and uncontrollable, has already repudiated Young China; the horde of hungry politicians remains absorbed in futile arguments and sordid intrigues; the Government is without prestige, policy or power; three parties in the State, alike

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forgetful of their country's urgent needs, struggle for place and pelf; the Cabinet is distracted by the advice of amateur politicians at the capital and the threats and protests of the provinces."

These opinions were naturally denounced with great vehemence by Young China in the vernacular Press, and challenged by more than one vocational optimist amongst the foreign advisers of the Chinese Government. They were also freely criticised by certain writers, notably in America, who had discovered, in Sun Yat-sen and his ready-made Republic, Heaven-sent proof of the saving grace of democratic principles. The *Daily News*, for example, quoted with approval the opinion of a well-known Oriental scholar, who, writing from Peking in November 1912, said :—

"The influence of men like Sun Yat-sen and Huang Hsing has tended to effect a *rapprochement* between the Nationalists and President Yuan Shih-k'ai, to the great improvement of the situation. The position here has improved to an extraordinary extent."

A month later the *Christian Science Monitor* of Boston, U.S.A., severely criticising my views, gave a glowing account of the preparations which it seriously believed were then a-foot in China for "the elections for the first National Parliament." Its picture of political activities under the Republic is worth reproducing, not only because of its earnest absurdity, but because, in spite of all that has since happened, the same sort of nonsense is still being written by the incurable theorists who insist that the East is bound to derive moral and material benefits from adopting the political institutions of the West.

Wrote the Editor of the *Monitor* :—

"Sharply contrasted with the pessimistic predictions of Mr. Bland, whilom representative of the London *Times* in Peking, now giving a series of lectures at the Lowell Institute in Boston, are the hopeful comments of the Chinese Press and public men on the course of events

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during the first year of the Republic. . . . Unless our sources of information are much distorted, the twelvemonth has disclosed both Sun Yat-sen and Yuan Shih-k'ai as large enough to subordinate themselves and their ambitions to performing genuine national duties, one as a peripatetic teacher of racial unity throughout the provinces, and the other as provisional President, handling diverse domestic and international problems with sagacity and patience. No mere novices or doctrinaires are in power at Peking, as Mr. Bland would have the American public believe. . . . Evidently they err who think the Chinese ill-adapted to deal with principles and methods of government. The papers of State issued at Peking to-day not only lack most of the former ornateness of phrasing and absurdity of excuse for official lapses which often used to make the Imperial Decrees as ludicrous as they were cruel; these papers are now straightforward, logical, and impressive in their vital dealings with concrete needs of the people."

Many visions of the new Chinese Arcadia were vouchsafed at this period. Here is one proclaimed by Mr. Hua Chuen-mei, Secretary of the China Society of America, in an article published by the New York *Tribune* in January 1913:—

"Since the establishment of the Republic, all the officials of the country have been fulfilling their administrative and judicial functions, and commerce and industry have been resumed with added eagerness and enterprise. Every branch of civil life has been, or is being, reconstituted or modified to accord with the new national spirit. The people as a whole are content and pleased with the Government they have ordained, because even in the short space of a twelvemonth, that Government has demonstrated its honesty, its efficiency, and its loyalty to the national ideals. . . .

"In the fall of 1911, when the revolutionary armies in the Yangtsze Valley raised the standard of republicanism as against monarchism, China had found herself. The enthusiasm for popular sovereignty spread like wild prairie fire. The eighteen mutually jealous provinces under the Manchu régime now ceased to be divided.

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The movement for a series of independent States was promptly thrown overboard, and the people of all China eagerly and without coercion fell into line, first to oust the Manchu, then to establish representative Government. . . .

". . . The people of China had spoken loud and unmistakably in favour of the democratic principle of Government. Besides, the form of republicanism, long ago communicated by American merchants and missionaries and by the Chinese students educated in American institutions of learning, had already universally infected the people, and as the years passed, the symptoms of a wider consciousness of popular rights developed into a veritable contagious disease for national freedom and enfranchisement."

I have quoted the above, not only because of its melancholy retrospective interest, but because it is typical of the windy ullage with which the Young China of Western learning still regales its admirers abroad; typical of the kind of bread which returns to us, after many days, cast by the hand of error upon the waters of delusion.[1]

It is only fair to say that public opinion abroad during the first years of the Republic was powerfully influenced by the consistently optimistic views of the late Dr. Morrison, the famous *Times* correspondent, who became an adviser to the Chinese Government in 1912. Dr. Morrison's sympathies were instinctively with the foreign-educated section of Young China, and in spite of many disillusions, he clung to his genial belief that it would eventually produce leaders imbued with disinterested patriotism and constructive statesmanship. His indomitable optimism and loyalty to those whom he served, led him to turn a tolerant, not to say a blind eye, to the seamy side of Chinese politics, and to emphasise their bright spots. Thus in the winter of 1912, his views on

[1] Dr. Wellington Koo, lately Chinese Minister at Washington, put it even more artistically, when he said, "In reconstructing her government on the principle of sovereignty vested in the people as a body, China has thrown autocracy overboard and is putting her house in order under the aegis of democracy."

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the situation, published as an interview in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and circulated broadcast, were of a nature to encourage confidence in the future, if only because of the worthy doctor's world-wide reputation. As the *Spectator* observed :—

"Dr. Morrison's vision of China is radiant. Trade has reached a record; the soldiers who used to prey upon the country when dismissed penniless from the army, now receive their pay and become quiet and useful citizens; no one desires the return of the Manchus, because every one knows the difference between gross rapacity and a sincere attempt to govern decently; daily newspapers and cheaper telegrams carry enlightenment throughout the land, the Christian calendar has been officially adopted, and Sunday is recognised as a day of rest; and oil, by the genial light of which newspapers can be read in the long, dark evenings, has brought a moral illumination into the lives of the people, since they are no longer driven to the solacing distraction of opium."

It is also necessary to remember, in judging these opinions retrospectively, that political economy is a dreary science; that there is no delusion so prevalent as belief in the miracle of a nation re-born and structurally changed by means of a revolution; and that the enthusiasms born of that belief are always keen and contagious. He who, moved by the emotion of such enthusiasm, discerns the splendid dawn of a new era, may be absolved if his vision is surcharged with *couleur de rose*. But when the dream-castles of that dawn have vanished in the clear light of day, a heavy responsibility rests with those who, either as zealots or as optimists *de métier*, continue to proclaim their solid virtues.

During the first two years of the Republic, the British Press as a whole shared the prevalent enthusiasm for the new era, to the extent that it was generally prepared to suspend its verdict as to the merits and capacity of Young China, and to judge the tree by its fruits. As a reviewer in the *Spectator* put it (December 7, 1912) :—

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"If it were safe to surrender oneself entirely to the voice of authority in judging of Chinese affairs to-day, we should be guided unhesitatingly by Mr. Bland. But just now authority speaks with a divided voice. There is Dr. Morrison, for instance, who is as confident about the future of China as Mr. Bland is doubtful. Professor Reinsch[1] also inclines to the side of the optimists."

At the same time, the English Press, better informed concerning foreign affairs than the majority of American papers, was never greatly impressed by the eloquence of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, and by many it was felt that a grave responsibility was incurred by those missionaries and other well-meaning enthusiasts who had advised and encouraged Young China to believe, or at least to proclaim, that the solution of their country's dangers and difficulties was to be found in the adoption of a Republican form of Government. Thus, speaking of Sun Yat-sen, the *Observer* said (December 8, 1912):—

"To the support which the outer world gave to this unpractical theoriser, are due the facts that the Chinese Republic stands upon a base of sand, that the moderate men are looking forward to the re-establishment of a monarchy, the army to a military despotism or extended anarchy, the provinces to autonomy, and the robber Powers around China to spoliation on a scale even bigger than has hitherto been possible. Young China's friends have served the honest members of the party badly, by persuading Europe and America to accept as genuine the elaborate sham which has been erected, by talking of the solidity of the Republic and the acquiescence of the people."

In a special review of "Recent Events and Present Policies in China," published in the *Nineteenth Century* for May 1913, Earl Cromer observed:—

"We English are largely responsible for creating the frame of mind which is even now luring Young Turks,

[1] Formerly American Minister at Peking; now financial adviser to the Chinese Government in New York.

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Chinamen, and other Easterns into the political wilderness by the display of false signals. We have, indeed, our Blands in China, our Milners in Egypt, our Miss Durhams in the Balkan Peninsula, and our Miss Bells in Mesopotamia, who wander far a-field, gleaning valuable facts and laying before their countrymen conclusions based on acquired knowledge and wide experience. But their efforts are only partially successful. They are often shivered on the solid rock of preconceived prejudice and genuine but ill-informed sentimentalism. A large section of the English public are, in fact, singularly wanting in political imagination. Although they would not, in so many words, admit the truth of the statement, they none the less act and speak as if sound national development in whatsoever quarter of the world, must of necessity proceed along their own conventional, insular, and time-honoured lines, and along those lines alone."

A little later Earl Cromer wrote to me:—

"I am very glad you liked my paper in the *Nineteenth Century;* it represents my sincere convictions. Although I do not possess any local knowledge of Chinese affairs, I have very little doubt that your forecast will turn out to be correct, only, as not infrequently happens with prophets, you will very likely have to wait some while before your prophecies are fulfilled. As a rule, people who see clearly into a general situation are rather apt to under-rate the time required for political evolution. The *locus classicus* on this subject is the case of De Tocqueville, who, in the very early days, cast an extraordinarily accurate horoscope of the course which would be run by the Second Empire, but it took seventeen years before events proved how correct he had been."

When Earl Cromer wrote of the "genuine but ill-informed sentimentalism" which had led certain classes of Englishmen to sow seeds of unrest amongst Oriental peoples, he was judging from the results of his own experience and observation in the Near East. In China, our faddists, fanatics, and intellectual Bolsheviks have, no doubt, done their bit, but on the whole the influences which have created the most mischief, by breeding a spirit of indiscipline and sedition among the younger

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generation of *literati*, and by encouraging political alarms and excursions in the name of democracy, have been more American than English. It is worthy of note in this connection that, now that the chickens of this particular error are coming home to roost, it is from the same intellectual sources that emanate the latest warnings of the Yellow Peril, the American Vision of Pan-Asia, " welded into a common solidarity of feeling against the Dominant White Man," of the white race swamped in " the rising tide of colour," and civilisation wiped out " by the imperious urge of the coloured world towards racial expansion ! " [1] Thus, at the present moment, while one group of well-meaning enthusiasts is fervently advocating the abolition of the foreigner's extra-territorial rights in China, as a matter of abstract justice, another group of equally sympathetic advisers sees no remedy for the existing chaos but the application of strict foreign supervision, not only to China's finances, but to her internal political machinery ! [2]

. . . . . .

I would ask the reader to believe that, in thus referring to the part played by foreign sympathisers and advisers during the period immediately following the Revolution, I have no wish to flourish the prophet's mantle, or to drag coat-tails of complacency. My purpose in traversing this old ground is two-fold. Firstly, to emphasise the fact that those who have encouraged the Western-learning " Intellectuals " of Young China to apply their ill-digested text-book theories to the business of government, have incurred serious responsibility and wrought much mischief. (It must, I think, be admitted that if the disastrous experiments of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and his followers had not been supported by Europeans on the spot, and by the sympathy of public opinion abroad, their career would have been brief, Yuan Shih-k'ai

[1] Vide *The Rising Tide of Colour*, by Lothrop Stoddard. Scribners.

[2] Vide *Modern Constitutional Development in China*, by Harold M. Vinacke. Princetown University Press.

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would have succeeded in restoring something like law and order, and the present chaos of strife and corruption would have been to a great extent averted.) Secondly, I desire to show that, notwithstanding the parlous results achieved by Young China's politicians in the name of Democracy, there is still a tendency, in certain quarters (especially where "moral uplift" is combined with a shrewd business instinct), to apply the old *couleur de rose* and to create a very misleading impression abroad as to the actual condition of affairs in the Far East, thus encouraging the self-constituted rulers of China in the belief that responsible opinion in America and Europe sympathises with their theories, and sanctions their practices, of government.

I have spoken of the optimist *de métier*. I know of no more striking example of the pernicious nonsense with which Young China has been fed and misled, than "the semi-official statement of China's case to the world," published by Mr. Putnam Weale in 1918, under the title *The Fight for the Republic in China*. When this book was written, the northern Military Party, subsidised by Japan, had just succeeded in defeating General Chang Hsün's attempt to restore the Monarchy and his own fortunes, and in the collapse of this farcical *coup d'état*, Mr. Weale found welcome proof of the devotion of the Anfu faction to the principles of enlightened Liberalism. Once again, whilst lawlessness stalked red-handed through the plundered land, and proofs multiplied on every hand that the so-called democracy had become more flagrantly venal than ever before, he descried the dawn of a new era, in which the world would "welcome China to the family of nations, not only on terms of equality, but as a representative of Liberalism and a subscriber to all those sanctions on which the civilisation of peace rests." He predicted that "within a limited period, Parliamentary Government would be more successful in China than in some European countries," and "something very similar to the Anglo-Saxon theory of

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Government impregnably entrenched in Peking." In his opinion, "the marvellous revolution of 1911 had given back to this ancient race its old position of leader of ideas on the shores of the Yellow Sea." Finally, he expressed the confident belief, "based on a knowledge of all the facts," that China would shortly achieve "a united Government and a cessation of internecine strife." The whole tenour of his writing was such as to encourage the world at large to see in the sordid strife of politicians like Tuan Chi-jui, Chang Hsün, Sun Yat-sen, and Tang Shao-yi, a conflict of high principles, from which an enlightened democracy was emerging, with healing in its wings. "The new China," he declared, "is a matter of life and death to the people, and the first business of the foreigner is to uphold the new beliefs." For those who fill highly-paid posts as advisers under the Chinese Government, this may be so, but for the majority of foreigners in the East, the "new beliefs," as manifested by the mandarins and military chieftains of the new dispensation, are an alien and parasitic growth, which threatens to paralyse the ancient and venerable tree of Chinese civilisation.

Mr. Weale's book was written before the world had witnessed Russia's appalling demonstration of the truth that when a nation unfitted for representative government is cast into the melting-pot of "red" revolution, an unprofitable scum rises to the top, and that the consequences for the man in the street are very different from those predicted by the Intellectual harbingers of the millennium. The world has witnessed the disillusion of the honest dreamers who believed that the Russian nation and its government would be purged of evil by the abolition of the autocracy; if China's affairs were not beyond its normal ken, it would know that here also, as in Russia, the patriotic Intellectuals have been put to silence and shame by the professional agitator and the place-seeker. Almost before Mr. Weale's book was published, the course of events at Peking had revealed

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something of the real nature of the "civilisation of peace" to be expected from the contending political factions, for General Chang Hsün had been whitewashed (for value received) and orders had been issued by the President for the arrest of Sun Yat-sen and other Cantonese malcontents.

The present brief study of the actual condition of affairs in the Far East is based generally on observation of the conditions existing early in 1920. At the time of my visit to Peking, in February, the storm was brewing, which eventually led to the overthrow of Marshall Tuan Chi-jui, "Little Hsü," and the Japanese-subsidised "Anfu" clique by General Wu Pei-fu and the Chihli faction, to a heavy bill of costs by the military commanders, and a redistribution of the spoils of office. As usual, professional and amateur apologists for the "world made safe for democracy," vied with each other in proclaiming that the defeat of Tuan and his friends assuredly meant the end of false dawns, and that General Wu Pei-fu, with his National Convention, would inaugurate the long-expected new era. Well, Tuan bowed in due course to the superior forces brought to bear against him and went his dignified way into lucrative retirement; the National Convention was speedily forgotten in the turmoil of new intrigues amongst the victors, and to-day the Directors of the Southern Parliament still refuse to be persuaded to come into the Northern fold, and still accuse the Northern leaders of selling their country's birthright for a mess of Japanese pottage.

In the meantime, while the politicians fight for place and power, what of the destinies of the common people, in whose name and for whose alleged benefit the contending factions appeal to the world at large? The sorrows and sufferings to which the "stupid people" have been exposed during the past ten years are very seldom mentioned by the apologists of misrule, and the Chinese Parliamentarians are more concerned in discussing the forms and proceedings of their embryo

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Constitution than in relieving the miseries of provinces decimated by brigandage and famine. These things are lightly dismissed, or described as the inevitable condition of a race inured to such calamities since the beginning of time. The world will never know the nature and extent of the sufferings endured by the common people throughout China since the passing of the Manchu dynasty, nor will any census reveal the number of those who have "gone to their graves like beds." While Europe was at war, the affairs of the inarticulate East concerned us less than usual; and even to-day, when millions are silently dying of famine in North China, we hear more of Sun Yat-sen's latest political manifestoes than of measures for the prevention of these catastrophes. Your optimist *de métier* points triumphantly to the fact that China's foreign trade for the past year constitutes a record, and from this fact he proceeds to draw conclusions reassuring for the bond-holder and comfortable for the worthy people who like to believe that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

From the chapters of the present work which deal with China, the reader may learn something of the condition of affairs in the summer of 1920, and be able to form his own opinion as to the material and moral benefits which the Chinese people have derived from the attempt of the revolutionaries of 1911 to adapt to their use and for their own advantage the political institutions of the West. But in order to make the story more complete in detail, and to bring it more fully up to date, let me supplement it with certain recent extracts from the *North China Herald*.

Here, for example, are the Index headings of Outport News, as given in the issue of November 15, 1920. (It is to be observed that most of the *Herald's* inland correspondents are missionaries):—

Kuangsi expelled from Canton.
North Kiangsu notes; the burden of the soldiers.

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Malcontents of Changsha.
Szechuan's dramatic victory.
Independence Day in Szechuan.
Celebrating the Victory in Szechuan.
Stranded missionaries in Szechuan.
The Bandit Tyrant of Pakhoi.
The new Bank in Tsinanfu.
Yangchow notes: sacrifice for famine sufferers.
Skirmish with Robbers.
The Upper Yangtsze revisited.
Threatened rising of Tibetans.
Hangchow notes: inter-College Sports.
By the Yellow River in Mongolia.
Teachers on strike in Honan.
Slavery non-existent in Hongkong.
Soldiers' requisitions in Hunan.
Unwelcome visitors in Kneichow.
Mr. Colvil's death (killed by Chinese troops).
College Principal beaten by Students.
Mr. Shaw released.
Scandalous state of the River Han.
Japanese Seamen's Combine.
Pirate raid near Soochow.
Hongkong's need of wireless.
The Great Famine in North China.
Motors in Anhui.
New American Church in Shaohsing.
China and Socialism.
Piracy near Hongkong.

I venture to suggest that this list presents a picture of the actual conditions of affairs in China, of the prevailing lawlessness and brigandage and famine, more convincing than all the visions of Utopia provided by Peking's political pundits.

Under the heading "The Upper Yangtsze revisited," occurs the following note concerning the opium traffic, interesting in the light of the many virtuous manifestoes

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that have been, and are still being, published on the subject by the Radical Republican leaders :—

"The great increase of the contraband opium trade was the cause of frequent comment on the Upper Yangtsze. It seems to parallel what one hears of the liquor-smuggling in America, for I was told that large numbers were being attracted by the great profits, and people of hitherto unimpeachable reputation were engaged in the trade; so that in this way, as well as by the use of the drug, numerous people were being debauched. . . . Caravans of the drug have been brought over by the soldiers from Yünnan and Kueichow, where the planting has been encouraged and even insisted upon by the officials, who in some cases have taxed it when planted, when in blossom, and when the drug is gathered. The blame rests entirely upon the south-west government, and it would seem that the leaders, such as Wu Ting-fang, Tang Shao-yi, Sun Yat-sen, C. T. Wang, and others, men of integrity, should stop this traffic or accept the responsibility for it." [1]

A similar report from South Fukien appeared in the *North China Herald* of November 20, 1920.

Here is another picture, supplied by a traveller who has recently made a journey of some three thousand miles through the more remote regions of the Central and North-Western provinces and Sin Kiang. It conveys some idea of the kind of felicity which has been conferred on the common people by the new dispensation.

"The country all over is stamped with the seal of war and rapine, of the ravages and wholesale destruction and massacres caused by the several Mahomedan risings; ruins of whose villages, temples, farms, and country houses, are met all the way along.

"Even places such as Sian and Lanchow have lost; during this strenuous century of national evolution, the lustre of their prestige and glory of yore; rebellion,

[1] I have dealt with some facts of the opium trade elsewhere—*vide* page 290. In this connection it is interesting to find an authority like Sir Charles Addis publicly announcing, as late as the 19th January, 1921, that "under the Republic the Opium Trade has been suppressed, the degrading practice of footbinding abandoned, examination by torture abolished, early marriages discountenanced, a free Press created," etc., etc.

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revolutions, floods, and other calamities having delivered the *coup de grâce*. Minor towns are empty and pretty dead; evidence of their once having enjoyed greater prosperity is visible, but that is about all there is left! Villages are a collection of squalid hovels."

The editor of the *North China Herald*, always a sympathetic recorder of events and a sincere friend of the Chinese people, summed up the situation last July, in the following words:—

"Those who have found it a weariness to follow the accounts of China's civil war in our pages from day to day, and have found them merely an interminable record of bickering and chicanery, have our sympathy; but they have nevertheless missed an interesting page of history in the making, and an instructive comment on the failure of Democracy in this young Republic. The present deplorable situation originated in the ineptitude of Parliament and in the failure of the people's representatives to think imperially, or indeed to think of anything but their personal profit and selfish aggrandisement. China is a vast country and ought to be represented by big men; unfortunately, though she has three Parliaments, one in Peking, one in Canton, and a third which proposes to transfer its activities to Chungking, there is not to be found in any of them a man who rises above the level of mediocrity, and it is to be feared there are many who fall beneath even this low standard. . . . The present situation is that there is fighting between the Chihli and Anhui forces, with the President making futile efforts to bring about peace, while Chang Tso-lin threatens to march his whole Manchurian army—100,000 men on paper—to crush whoever refuses to hearken to his offers or commands. The nation looks on with interest. It is a contest between the militarists, and, whoever succeeds, the ideal of government by the people for the people will not be advanced a hairbreadth. 'When the city gate is on fire the fishes in the moat perish,' and while armies struggle, agriculture and industry are being ruined. Whoever triumphs, the result of the present upheaval will doubtless be to keep the yoke of militarism as firmly as ever on the neck of the people of China. As Europe has learned to its sorrow, it is possible to win the



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war and lose the peace, so China is beginning to understand that that blessed word democracy does not mean peace, and that prosperity and order are not necessary corollaries of a successful revolution and a republican form of government. The fact is, the form of government is of much less importance than the character of the men who administer it."

Since these words were written, the world (or that small part of it which is interested in the destinies of China) has been confronted by the terrible spectacle of millions of inoffensive, thrifty peasants dying of starvation in the famine region, quite close to the centres of Government, while all the time the politicians, callously indifferent to their pitiful plight, continue to wrangle over the whited supulchre of a meaningless Constitution, and the Tuchuns make war, one upon another, for the right to plunder the survivors.

This brief review of actualities, based on the evidence of disinterested and sympathetic observers, brings us back to first principles, and to emphatic repudiation of the idea that law and order, peace and prosperity, can be attained in China, either by the present generation or the next, through the assertion of democratic ideals or the creation of representative institutions. The idea springs from the perennial delusion, of those whose business or pleasure it is to apply their theories to facts of which they have not sufficient experience, that states of society can be swiftly re-modelled by legislative enactments and systems of culture, and that a nation can be fitted for self-government by the adoption of a code. In the case of the irresponsible mandarins who have so grievously mis-ruled China since the revolution, it is incontestably true that, in the words of Mill, " the name and forms of popular representation have had no effect but to prevent despotism from attaining the stability and security by which alone its evils can be mitigated or its few advantages realised." Can it be doubted that, if Yuan Shih-k'ai had been allowed to restore the system

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of paternal despotism which the Chinese people (mandarins included) understand and respect, he would have delivered them out of the hands of many of their present oppressors, and given peace in his time, even as Diaz gave peace to Mexico?

Amongst the Intellectual idealists in the United States who have lately studied the Chinese problem, the name of Professor Dewey carries great weight, and rightly so, for his outlook combines a philosophical and scholarly attitude with humanism of the benevolent type. He differs from the orthodox idealist in so far that he perceives the fundamental problem of China to be, not political, but economic and social. In a recently published article, speaking of the characteristic callousness of the Chinese, he justly observes:—

"Where there is a complete manifestation of the Malthusian theory of population, friendliness develops with great difficulty to the point of active effort to relieve suffering; where further increase in population means increase in severity of the struggle for subsistence, aggressive benevolence is not likely to assume large proportions. On the contrary, when the cutting off of thousands by plague, or flood, or famine means more air to breathe and more land to cultivate for those who remain, stoic apathy is not hard to attain."

Professor Dewey might have added that the same observation holds true when the population is decimated by battle, murder, and sudden death; these, like all other calamities, are philosophically accepted by the survivors. But when he comes to discuss the remedy for this deplorable condition of affairs, the Professor still seeks and finds it in the panaceas of his own class and kindred, and advocates a remedy the immediate result of which, if applied, would only be to increase the density of China's population at the expense of the rest of the world. If it be true that China's procreative recklessness is the fundamental cause of the pitiful condition under which the masses struggle for existence, what can

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it profit them, or humanity, to stimulate this racial tendency by "an introduction of modern industrial methods which will profoundly affect their environment"? Is it not self-evident that if "mining, railways, and manufacturing, based upon China's wealth of unused resources, give a new outlet for energies that cannot now be used," the immediate result would be to enable the Chinese to compete with other nations in the world's food-markets, and, while thus increasing their own numbers, to aggravate the problem of existence in countries which cannot possibly compete with low-standard Oriental labour? China's problem is essentially and eternally a food problem, which until now the nation has solved, tragically enough, within its own borders. To encourage her to solve it henceforth by industrial competition with the white race, is very typical of the political idealism of a country which nevertheless protects itself rigorously against Asiatic immigration.

Idealism of this curiously illogical kind is by no means confined to those professors and philanthropists in the United States who have recently displayed interest in China; the same tendency to ignore the existence of all unpleasant facts which conflict with preconceived ideas, and to proclaim these ideas as facts, has been conspicuous in the attitude of several of the distinguished business men and politicians who have recently visited China. Very typical and instructive, for example, are the words in which Mr. Thomas W. Lamont, head of the American group of the Consortium, has borne testimony to the political activities and influence of American missionaries by virtue of which China is to cease to be merely a people and become a nation.[1] Very significant also were the attitude and utterances of the large party of Congressmen, accompanied by their wives, sisters, and daughters, who visited China last autumn. The party, which included Mr. John Burke, Treasurer of the United States, and Dr. Paul Reinsch, ex-Minister to China, was enter-

[1] *Vide infra*, p. 127.

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

WISDOM IN THE ROUGH.

*B. T. Prideaux*]

VERY BUSY.

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tained on its way through Shanghai at a banquet given by the Pan-Pacific Association, at which Mr. Tang Shao-yi (President of the Association) welcomed the distinguished guests, and Dr. Sun Yat-sen held forth for over an hour in eloquent eulogy of his own political activities, and applauded his persistence in continuing the struggle between the South and the North, "in order to save China from Japanese militarists." Dr. Reinsch spoke for the visitors. The keynote of his speech was contained in his fervent declaration that "out of all the world, Dr. Sun stood out as the representative of the Chinese ideal, true to her inner traditions and the ideals Americans believed in. First of all, he was a true and great Chinese Liberal." Furthermore, he said that it was the duty of the civilised world "to sustain China in her struggle for higher organisation of national life. There could not be tolerated any intrigue, military or diplomatic, against the integrity and sovereignty of China. Asia, Africa, and Europe must look upon China as the mother of civilisation."

It would be difficult, I think, to quote a more striking example of the hypnotic influence of catchwords and preconceived ideas, and of the force of delusions in which the wish is ever father to the thought. Dr. Reinsch, having had occasion to study the Chinese situation on the spot for several years, can scarcely plead ignorance of the facts of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's career, of his long and intimate connection with "Japanese militarists" and financiers; of his acceptance of highly-paid office under Yuan Shih-k'ai, against whom he subsequently conspired; of his incessant plots and intrigues against the Central Government, no matter how constituted; of his failure, during all these years, to originate one single measure of constructive reorganisation. Dr. Reinsch must be aware that, in the opinion of foreigners in China, Dr. Sun has for some years been regarded as a very mischievous agitator, and that even in the Chinese Press he figures more often as a laughing-stock than as a

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Liberal. His latest intrigues with the Anfu clique and Tuan Chi-jui (whom he formerly denounced as a traitor) have proved once more that his ideals are scarcely of the kind that most Americans believe in. But Dr. Reinsch and his friends prefer to shut their eyes to all these things. They remember only that Dr. Sun is, intellectually speaking, the offspring of American ideals, that he has proclaimed a Republic, professed Christianity, and preached the pure doctrine of American democracy. How, then, can he fail to be truly representative of the ideal Chinese statesman? Dr. Sun, Mr. Tang Shao-yi, Dr. Wu Ting-fang, and other "distinguished leaders of the Constitutionalist cause," have now gone back to Canton, there to re-organise their independent "Military Government" and to resume operations, through Kuangsi, against the Central Government. Is it exaggerating the influence of Dr. Reinsch and his Congressional party to suggest that, were it not for their sympathy and support, Dr. Sun and his friends might have hesitated before committing themselves, and condemning the country, to a further period of senseless civil war?

While on the subject of the Canton Parliament and "the leaders of the Constitutionalist cause," it should be observed that, apart from the advantages of world-wide notoriety to be derived from the direction of civil war, the business of Constitution-making, as practised by the "true and great Liberals" of the Canton faction, is not without its solid advantages. According to a Chinese student, who investigated the record of the Canton legislators on the spot, and published the results in the *North China Herald* (June 5, 1920), the members of the "Old" Parliament at Canton (as distinct from the "New" Parliament at Peking) received in salaries and subsidies sums amounting to $4,240,000 in less than two years. Of this total, half a million dollars represented "special contributions for the purpose of completing the Constitution for the Republic of China." The investigator commented acidly on the fact that, despite this

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lavish expenditure, the Constitution has not been completed, that it remains, in fact, "where it was when Yuan Shih-k'ai decided that he could govern the country unassisted." He pointed out that, when driven by their Kuangsi rivals to seek refuge at Shanghai, these Parliamentarians "forthwith appointed a Commission to study ways and means for raising funds to support themselves." Finally, he asked, "what excuse has the Old Parliament for living?" and the answer which he gave to this question deserves the attention of those who continue to proclaim the disinterested patriotism of the Cantonese faction.

"What," he asks, "has the Old Parliament done? It has done this and this alone: it has served as a constitutional smoke-screen for militarists of one faction or another. It has befogged the minds of the Chinese and foreigners here. It has encouraged civil war for principles in which it has no faith. It has permitted generals to battle against each other for jobs and has levied payments for its consent. It has sat in Canton, while its heart was in Shanghai and Peking. It has perpetuated itself and forbidden the compromising of issues between North and South on any basis other than its own longevity. It has supported its paymaster and has forfeited the welfare of the land in accepting this support.

"But its crime consists not in its corruption, but in its effects upon the growing generation. Everybody knows and accepts the iniquity of Peking officialdom, but the country has regarded the Old Parliament as a body which stands between corruption and good government. And now that too is gone. Nobody can be trusted. There is no honour in China. The country is going to boot and nobody cares. So the people speak and so the Old Parliament's activities have encouraged them to speak."

(The "Old Parliament," be it noted, includes the most brilliant lights of Liberalism and Western learning in China's political firmament.)

But, as will be shown in subsequent chapters, there are

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many sincere friends of China who, while recognising the moral failure of Young China's present leaders, pin their faith as firmly as ever to the younger generation of Western-educated students, much in the same spirit as every English officer pinned his faith to the men of his own regiment at the time of the Indian Mutiny. Because every human being is, and must always be, the combined product of his ancestry and environment, and for other reasons, which will be stated in their place, I find it as difficult to share this belief to-day as I did in 1911. And this scepticism is fortified just as much by doubts as to the relevance and moral value of the education which is being imparted to the present generation, as by study of the results of that education on its predecessors.

Let me cite two illustrations, both provided in the recent writings of "Western-learning" Intellectuals of the highest type. In the first, Mr. S. G. Cheng, an M.A. of Oxford, describes "Modern China" from the standpoint of his own class and creed. Like many of that class, Mr. Cheng combines great mental ability with sincere patriotism, but his book emphasises on almost every page the disabilities produced by Western education on the Oriental mind, which, do what you will, remains beneath the surface true to type, contemplatively philosophical and instinctively opposed to the practical scientific attitude of Western materialism. Mr. Cheng realises that continuance of the present deplorable condition of affairs in China is likely to end in national disaster, and he attributes this condition to the work of a few politicians "who are not supported at all by the popular wishes or voice. The Northern Militarists and Southern Constitutionalists, who both claim to fight for the liberty of the people, alike ignore the feelings and sufferings of the silent mass. . . . The future of China depends upon the training of her inhabitants that will enable them to carry on their Government free from any exploitation of political adventurers." In other words, the nature of the people must be changed, so as to awaken

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them to an intelligent capacity of self-government. This, he thinks, may be achieved "by education and increasing contact with the West," but, like most of those who share this opinion, he overlooks the important fact that it is chiefly from the "Western-learning" mandarin class that to-day's most active groups of political adventurers have emerged! If this has been the result of contact with the West at the top, what justification is there for hoping for better results from further disturbance of the tranquil mind of the masses?

Very significant are those passages in Mr. Cheng's book in which he discusses the political ascendancy of Japan at Peking. He sums up the situation frankly in these words: "In pursuance of Imperialistic and Jingoistic aims, the Government of Tokyo has bribed certain undesirable elements in the country, placed them in power and supported them with money to cover their administrative expenses." The blame for this state of affairs he ascribes, not to the undesirable elements, who are in reality the chief offenders, but to Japan. Herein he speaks with the same voice as his brilliant *confrères*, Mr. Wellington Koo and C. T. Wang, who represented China at the Versailles Conference. Like them, he proposes several remedial measures and reforms to relieve the situation thus created, such as a revision of the Tariff and the abolition of extra-territoriality; like them, also, he remains strangely silent concerning the vital need of integrity in the Public Service, and of measures to check the activities of the "undesirable elements" aforesaid. It will be time to share Young China's enthusiasm for political adventures when its Intellectuals have come to recognise and denounce official corruption as the chief cause of their country's parlous plight.

The second illustration to which I refer was contained in an apologia for the "returned student," written last summer by Dr. M. T. Z. Tyau.[1] This writer lays stress

[1] Now legal adviser to the Chinese delegation to the League of Nations at Geneva.

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on the achievements of the class of students educated in America and England, by whose influence "the country has been changed from an absolute despotism to a popular democracy, from an antiquated conservatism to a modern liberalism." He goes on to deplore the fact that, the number of returned students having greatly increased, there are not enough Government jobs to go round, so that to-day, "through no fault of his own, he is at a "discount, just as the Bank of China and Bank of Com- "munications notes are depreciated. Of course, such a "state of affairs is abnormal and can only be temporary, "just as the Chinese Republic will soon really come into "its own. But while the unsatisfactory situation lasts, "the position of the returned student is far from enviable. "In the keen struggle for existence, diplomas and degrees "are often forgotten, and an incumbent (*sic*) for a certain "position might as well have stayed at home, instead of re- "turning with a foreign academic or professional training. "Consequently, the spectacle is often one of undignified "incongruities. This is as it should never be, and in- "dubitably will be remedied, as soon as the Liberal "elements come into power." A franker exposition of the economic basis of Chinese Liberalism would be difficult to discover; Dr. Tyau has put his finger, nevertheless, on the spot from whence arises most of the political unrest in China. When he proceeds to give a list of the returned students to whom is due "the modernisation of China's hoary civilisation," he is less convincing. The list begins with Ex-President Li Yuan-hung, includes our old friends, Wu Ting-fang, Admiral Sah, etc., and ends with Dr. Lew Yuklin, formerly Chinese Minister in London. The only conclusion which a dispassionate observer can draw from it is, that a foreign education does not necessarily unfit an intelligent Chinese for a mandarin's career.

To conclude. If, as I have said, the Chinese people are at present neither fitted for the exercise of self-government nor anxious for it, if the Republic is nothing but a name, and the framework of Parliamentary Govern-

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

CHINA: THE ETERNAL PROBLEM.

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mental hollow mockery, what of the future? By what means can China possibly be saved from complete disintegration and her inoffensive and defenceless people from further calamities? This question will be dealt with in the chapter which deals with the Problem of Reconstruction. But it may be useful at the outset to summarise certain conclusions which bear upon it:—

1. The ills that flesh is heir to in China, the chronic destitution, diseases, and discontents endured by vast numbers of the population, are directly due to the social system and religious beliefs, which make procreative recklessness a duty; these are evils which cannot possibly be removed, or even remedied, by any change in the form of government or political institutions of the nation.

2. While the inevitable development of China's mines, railways, and other sources of latent wealth by modern industrial methods is likely to diminish the normal severity of economic pressure for a time, by enabling her to increase her food supply from abroad, the immediate result will be an increase of her population up to the new limits of the means of subsistence; and this increase can only be achieved at the cost of increased economic pressure in countries where labour enjoys a higher standard of living. Europe and America will then be compelled to protect themselves against the products of Chinese industrialism in the same way, and for the same reason, that they now protect themselves against Asiatic immigration.

3. So long as the present Chinese social system endures, the only means by which the ever-latent elements of disorder can be held in check is a strong Central Government, organised and *administered upon principles which the masses understand and to which they always have been accustomed;* that is to say, principles of paternal despotism, applied in accordance with the spirit and traditions of the race.

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4. Under existing conditions, therefore, a democratic form of government, as understood in Europe and America, is impossible in China. To encourage the small minority of foreign-educated Intellectuals who profess to wish to apply it, can only result in making unrest, civil war, and brigandage, widespread and endemic, instead of local and epidemic.

5. The rapidly increasing financial and administrative difficulties which now confront the Chinese Government, as the result of ten years of civil strife and official corruption, can only be overcome, and the nation's recuperative powers encouraged, by concerted action of the Powers, directed, in the first instance, to the disarmament and disbandment of the rabble armies, which prey upon every form of productive industry, and thereafter to the moral and material support of the Central Government, howsoever constituted. When no more money is forthcoming for the maintenance of these armed hordes (and that day is close at hand) a crisis will occur; and to escape from their wrath, the mandarins will probably endeavour, as usual, to divert unpleasant attention from themselves by the instigation of an anti-foreign movement. When this crisis has passed, a period of reconstruction, with foreign supervision over China's finances, must of necessity be imposed.

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## CHAPTER II

### YUAN SHIH-K'AI (1912–1916)

IT will be remembered that, after being recalled to high office by the panic-stricken Manchus in October 1911, Yuan Shih-k'ai did all in his power to prevent the overthrow of the dynasty and the introduction of a Republican form of government.[1] For four months he struggled manfully against hopeless odds; but weakened by internal intrigues, and abandoned by the foreign Powers, to which he had confidently looked for moral and financial support, he finally made a virtue of necessity and accepted the Presidency of the Republic in March 1912. It is significant of the condition of political affairs in China that, only three months before, he had publicly declared that "to be a party to the establishment of a Republic would brand him as a liar before all the world." But in accepting the Presidency, with quite obvious mental reservations, he merely followed the opportunist traditions of his class and creed. He realised that the metropolitan administration and the mandarinate of the provinces were quite as thoroughly disorganised and terrified as the Manchus themselves by the swift development of Young China's revolution, and that the only hope of preserving the country from complete chaos lay in the re-establishment of a strong central authority—no matter what its name—at Peking.

As it was at the time of the triumph of the Young Turks in 1908, so it was when Young China upset the Dragon Throne in 1911. Misled by the tumult and the shouting of students and professional agitators who proclaimed the birth of a new era to the cry of "liberty,

[1] Vide *Recent Events and Present Policies*, pp. 152, *et seq.*



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equality, and fraternity," many observers at a distance, and some upon the spot, welcomed the establishment of the Republic as a proof of the Chinese people's political consciousness and fitness for representative government. In the infectious enthusiasm of the moment, the deep-rooted economic evils which are the permanent cause of social and political unrest in China, were overlooked; the clamour of self-seeking politicians was mistaken for an outburst of patriotic fervour, with the result that the permanence and constructive capacity of the new forces were greatly exaggerated.

In particular, many English and American missionaries were vocationally disposed to believe in Young China's intentions and ability to reclaim the people by virtue of Western learning and democratic institutions. In their zealous enthusiasm at the prospect of reaping the long-delayed harvest of their teachings, they were led to believe in the sudden awakening of the Chinese people's political morality. Therefore they overlooked not only the instinctive conservatism of the inarticulate masses, but the self-seeking ambitions which had produced this ferment—to say nothing of the corruption and administrative incapacity which, from the outset, characterised the revolutionary movement. They believed, in fact, in the miracle of a national re-birth. Thus it came about that the inauguration of the Republic was widely proclaimed in Europe and America as the dawn of a new era for China. For a year or more, diplomats, journalists, and missionaries vied with each other in forecasting the nation's brilliant future; everything that, after long centuries of education and effort, Europe had evolved in the direction of constitutional government, was to be introduced at once, and with complete success, in the new Utopia of the Far East. All the ancient foundations were to be uprooted with the Throne: Confucianism, the cult of ancestors, the patriarchal philosophy of the Sages, all were to be replaced, in the twinkling of an eye, by the latest thing in democratic institutions, with a Constitution broad-based on the nation's will,

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a government of the people by the people for the people, universal suffrage, conscription, and even votes for women.

Opinions of this kind, arising out of one of the most persistent delusions common to humanity, are more easily disseminated than dissolved. With regard to China's brief vision of Celestial Socialism, there are many observers who persist in believing in the mystic power of political formulæ to accomplish the impossible and to change the whole structural character of the race.[1] Yet the history of Young China's brief authority has been written with bloodshed and chaos throughout the land, in such a manner as to shatter beyond repair the people's faith in the healing virtue of the blessed word Republic. Within a year of Sun Yat-sen's declaration that the passing of the monarchy heralded "the dawn of peace and prosperity, just laws, and honest administration," the people's instinctive desire for authoritative rulership had already been clearly demonstrated. Even at that time Young China, absorbed in futile dissensions and sordid intrigues, had manifested the hopelessness of its bright vision of the millennium, while the struggle for supremacy between rival military chieftains was beginning to assume definite direction. Eight months after the revolution, the military and police authorities of the provinces had warned the members of the National Assembly "to cease from thwarting the Government by their senseless and selfish factions." The phenomena, which had been regarded by many as evidence of the fitness of the Chinese people for self-government under European institutions, had rapidly proved to be superficial and transient. The reaction of the *literati*, of the military and the merchant classes against Sun Yat-sen's political adventures, proved clearly, if proof were needed, that the real causes of unrest in China remain economic in their origin, and that, for

[1] Thus, quite recently an eminent financier has described the establishment of the Republic as "an experiment in self-government, unprecedented in scale and unique in its leap from autocracy to democracy without passing through the intervening stage of feudalism, as in Great Britain and Japan"!

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these, the catchwords of Republicanism could provide neither remedy nor relief.

It is not only interesting, but profitable, to look back upon and study the masterly statecraft by means of which Yuan succeeded in bringing something like order out of chaos, restoring the authority of the Central Government in many of the provinces, and repairing the administrative and fiscal machinery, dislocated by the revolution. For it may safely be predicted that, whenever the Strong Man emerges who shall put an end to the present suicidal strife of factions, the methods by which he will attain to and maintain his authority will be based on the stratagems and devices of Yuan Shih-k'ai and of his illustrious predecessor, Li Hung-chang. At the end of his first year of office in the Presidency, the Radicals of the Kuo-Min tang party still held the balance of power and Yuan's attitude was one of watchful waiting. He knew full well that the activities of Young China, the hybrid radicalism of Sun Yat-sen and his fellow fanatics, must speedily wear themselves out in futility against the irresistible deadweight of national conservatism. He could afford to give them rope, to let them discuss their paper constitutions and democratic ideals at Peking, while his secret agents were busy in the provinces, organising at strategical points the forces with which, when the time came, he would be able to put an end to any armed assaults that might be organised by the political factions. At that date it was impossible, by the light of Yuan's record under the Manchu dynasty, to predict his line of action or to gauge the measure of his strength of purpose in a protracted crisis. It had already been made manifest, for all who had eyes to see and ears to hear, that the Republic was a political interregnum, destined sooner or later to be replaced either by the absolute Monarchy of the Man of Destiny, or by a limited Monarchy tempered by cautious experiments in Constitutionalism; but even those who appreciated Yuan's statesmanship could not assert with any

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degree of confidence that he would display the qualities necessary to attain even partial command of a situation so complicated and so dangerous. It remained to be proved that he possessed the combination of diplomatic suppleness and ruthless despotism which is required for the making of a ruler in China. The velvet glove had been in evidence on more than one historic occasion—notably at the crisis of the Old Buddha's *coup d'état* in September 1898—but the iron hand had never been revealed in absolute authority.

Looking back to-day upon the chief events of Yuan's administration of the Presidency of the Republic, it is interesting to observe how each one marked a distinct and pre-arranged advance in a resolutely consistent policy, that policy which Yuan had frankly proclaimed from the outset as the country's only possible way of salvation. Western observers, even when familiar with the principles and practice of Chinese officialdom, found some difficulty in accounting for the boldness with which, at the first crisis of the revolution, Yuan resisted the abolition of the Monarchy and held his ground, almost alone, against the forces of Young China triumphant. They found it harder still to explain how it came to pass that, having thus declared himself, a man of Yuan's proved capacity in tactics of expediency should have been elected to the Presidency by the vote of Sun Yat-sen and his revolutionary colleagues, and that these men should apparently have believed in his conversion to democratic principles of government. And as they gradually came to perceive in each of his carefully-timed dramatic *coups* the working out to its logical conclusion of his unswerving belief in despotic government, all clearly pointing to the inevitable restoration of autocracy, it became correspondingly difficult to account for the childlike confidence in him displayed by the leaders of the Kuo-Min tang. It is impossible to believe that the members of the Nanking Assembly were individually and collectively beguiled by Yuan's belated profession



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of faith in the Republic: their *naïveté* in this matter can only be explained on the assumption that the delegates were more concerned for the furthering of their private ambitions than for the application of Republican principles, and that they looked to Yuan to play the game of party politics, as they conceived it, and with due regard to the part which they had played in putting him at the head of affairs.

The issue proved that they misjudged their man and the solidity of the classical orthodoxy which he had proclaimed in defending the Monarchy. Yuan, as President, proved himself a past-master in all the arts of mandarin intrigue: expert in opportunism, prudent in counsel, of many devices; a very Ulysses for stratagem, unwavering in the execution of his plans. He adhered boldly to the corrupt traditions of venal expediency, which have characterised the Government of China for centuries, to the nepotism and tortuous methods of Oriental statecraft; but in all, and above all, he fought steadily for the maintenance of the unbroken continuity of time-honoured traditions, for the preservation of the philosophy and morality of the Confucian system, and for the maintenance of the ancient social structure of civilisation, founded upon that system, whose apex is the Dragon Throne. He acted from the outset upon the conviction, which he had frankly confessed to *The Times* correspondent at Peking on November 20, 1911, that "the institution of a Republic could only mean the instability of a rampant democracy, of dissension and partition," and that its results would be chaos, "amidst which all interests would suffer and for several decades there would be no peace in the Empire." He believed, with good cause, that the politicians of Young China were either vain dreamers or ambitious place-seekers, and that by no possibility could their dreams be brought into any direct relation with the actualities of the life, the deep-rooted reverences and beliefs, of the Chinese people. Upon this belief he acted consistently, even

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while yielding lip-service to the Republican form of government and taking an empty oath of allegiance to the principle of representative institutions.

It is unnecessary to recapitulate here the incidents—many of them tragically sordid—of Yuan's successful campaign against the "rampant democracy" of Young China, or to trace in their order the stages by which he has slowly but surely restored the ancient edifice of autocracy, revered by the orthodox *literati* and accepted by the Chinese people as the foundation of the immemorial order of things. Two incidents, however, which clearly indicated the President's policy and the methods by which it was to be fulfilled, deserve to be remembered. The first was the summary execution, by his orders, of two Republican generals, accused of treasonable conspiracy at Wuchang, in August 1912—an act of autocratic martial law administered *à l'Orientale*, without hesitation or formalities. The second was the assassination at Shanghai, in April 1913, of Sung Chiao-jen, the Kuo-Min tang's candidate for the Premiership, under circumstances which pointed clearly to the complicity, if not the direct instigation, of the President. The Republican generals at Wuchang were dangerous because they were capable of organising a military revolt; Sung Chiao-jen was dangerous because, at the moment when the National Assembly was about to meet for the first time, he was the uncompromising advocate of Parliamentary, as opposed to Presidential, authority. In both instances the dangers were swiftly and ruthlessly removed, by measures of despotic barbarity as cold-blooded as those of Tzŭ Hsi at the height of her power; and in both instances Yuan's knowledge of his countrymen was justified by the fact that the nation accepted the situation without indignation, almost with indifference. According to *The Times* correspondent, indeed, the general opinion in China in the autumn of 1912, instinctively recognising the need for some effective authority, blamed Yuan for being "far too

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anxious not to transgress constitutional limits." He speedily rectified his shortcomings in that respect. If at any time after his inauguration as President he displayed a conciliatory attitude towards Young China, subsequent events proved that he was merely drawing back in order to jump the more effectively.

At the outset, Yuan's position was rendered dangerously insecure for lack of the sinews of war: until he had negotiated a large foreign loan, his authority lacked not only the prestige which recognition by the Powers conferred, but it lacked the means of purchasing the "loyalty" of military commanders like Chang Hsün and providing his agents at the provincial capitals with the only argument which is invariably convincing in China. Once placed in possession of funds, however, and assured of the sympathy and support of the Governments which direct the operations of the "Five Powers" group of financiers, Yuan could face with equanimity the Cantonese party's last desperate bid for place and power. "The war to punish Yuan" (July 1913) was a melancholy fiasco, and incidentally a valuable object-lesson in Chinese politics, because from beginning to end it was a matter of dollars and cents. The Army and Navy were frankly at the service of the highest bidder, and the only cash bidder was Yuan.

It was only after the President's easy victory over the rabble forces of Sun Yat-sen and Huang Hsing that his policy of centralisation revealed the hand of the Strong Man and his intention of restoring the principles and practice of autocratic government. He had bided his time—he had endured with philosophic calm the invasion of the high places of the metropolitan government by hordes of turbulent "Western-learning" students; he had given them rope, and they had hanged themselves. After the collapse of the last possible attempt at organised insurrection, the proscription of the Kuo-Min tang was inevitable. He removed it, as Cromwell removed the Rump Parliament, and no dog barked in all the

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land. At his subsequent formal "election" to the Presidency on October 6, 1913, he took occasion to emphasise the fact that, for the future, he proposed to rule without interference, in accordance with ancient tradition. "Restrictions have been placed on my authority," he observed, "which have hampered me in my work of promoting the country's best interests," to which was added the significant reminder that "he had always preferred conservative to radical courses." He proceeded, therefore, to adopt them, removing, one by one, the flimsy props of the Cantonese jerry-built Republicanism with the deliberate precision of a chess-player; and all the while, as he destroyed the substance of representative government, he continued solemnly to pay his respects to the memory of its shadow.

There was nothing surprising in the fact that Yuan Shih-k'ai, having defeated the armed forces of his political opponents, should have put an end to the farce of Parliamentary government at Peking by decreeing the dissolution of the Kuo-Min tang. From the Chinese point of view, there was nothing remarkable in his action; nor was there anything contrary to Chinese traditions of statecraft in the "face-saving" expedients and explanations by which he justified every subsequent move in a perfectly-planned policy. The only really remarkable feature of the situation lay in the failure of many European observers to foresee its inevitable conclusion, and in their apparently sincere belief that constitutional methods of government were still within the range of practical politics at Peking. The dissolution of the Kuo-Min tang resulted naturally in the abolition of the National Assembly, and thereafter, equally logically, in the suppression of the local self-government Assemblies throughout the country. Parliament was replaced by a Political Council and an "Administrative Conference for the revision of the Constitution." The Administrative Conference, a body of seventy-one members, was composed almost exclusively of men selected by the

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President and by his agents, the Tutuhs, in the provinces, *literati* and officials of the old régime. Yuan Shih-k'ai's first Presidential address to this body left no room for further doubts as to his policy. "The Republic," he declared, "had been in existence for two years, and during this period, principles and laws have been dragged in the dust, while morality, self-control, and righteousness have been swept into oblivion"—in other words, his own wise forecast had been completely fulfilled. Thereafter, adopting the traditional phraseology of Imperial decrees, he proceeded to express his opinion of "the minority of turbulent demagogues," who had brought such evils upon the State, the "specious rogues" who talked glibly of liberty, equality, and patriotism, "intent all the while on possessing themselves of others' wealth, with which they flee overseas, seeking shelter under the ægis of the foreigner." Finally, after expressing his belief in gradual reforms and his intention to adopt a policy of practical reconstruction, he declared that, in his experience of the art of government, men and money were more useful than revolutionary theories.

As regards money, he was by no means well supplied; but the men were ready to his hand, and those whom he selected as Tutuhs, to direct and express "public opinion" in the provinces, served him, on the whole, faithfully and well. With the scrupulous regard for appearances, the careful whitening of sepulchres, which is the first principle of government in China, every step which Yuan subsequently took towards the practical reconstruction of the old orthodox autocracy and centralisation of power, was taken ostensibly in response to the unanimous petition of the Tutuhs. On their representations (thoughtfully drafted, to prevent possible mistakes, in the President's Secretariat) the Provincial Assemblies were abolished. With their approval, and that of the Political Council, the Worship of Heaven was revived, with ceremonies similar to those observed by the Manchu dynasty. At their instance, the Pro-

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

A CHINESE GARDEN (AT SOOCHOW).

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visional Constitution was suspended till a more convenient season, and replaced by the Presidential system of government. The Cabinet became little more than a perfunctory body of well-paid secretaries, and the Premier's only duties were to appear at diplomatic functions and to countersign, *pro formâ*, the Presidential mandates. The Conference for the re-drafting of the Constitution, which met on March 18, 1914, afforded an indication of its quality by proposing to amend certain articles of the Code so as to confer on the President full power to declare war and make treaties without Parliamentary sanction. This was a typical example of collective "face-saving"—for all concerned were well aware that, in the absence of a successful revolution, there was no likelihood of any Parliament being convened. Had not the Provincial Assemblies been dissolved for "perversely usurping financial authority and obstructing the business of administration"? *Per contra*, at this juncture Yuan Shih-k'ai gave proof of the beginning of a policy of reconstruction, by instituting examinations to test the fitness of District Magistrates and other local authorities—a highly necessary reform, which might have led to practical results had Yuan been spared and had it been honestly carried out by competent examiners.

So long as Yuan Shih-k'ai's policy was confined to political and financial measures, clearly directed towards the re-establishment of the old order of metropolitan administration, public opinion accepted it placidly enough as a normal reaction against innovations that ran counter to the instincts and customs of the people. The Press, still largely controlled by Young China at the Treaty Ports, denounced it as unconstitutional, but the masses, knowing nothing of constitutions, were evidently unconcerned in the disputes of the scribes and politicians. They were only anxious that the bloodshed and brigandage, which they had come to associate with Republican ideas, should cease; wheresoever public opinion was articulate, it was evidently disposed to hope

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that Yuan, the Strong Man, would succeed in restoring law and order. The common people were weary of being looted in the name of liberty. It was only when the President, acting upon the "advice" of the Administrative Council, decided henceforward to perform the Winter Solstice sacrifice at the Temple of Heaven, that he became, in the sight of the people, something far more important than an administrator and a politician. By this momentous decision, Yuan Shih-k'ai carried his original profession of political faith to its logical conclusion—a conclusion which concerned the sons of Han in their daily lives, because it meant the restoration of the social structure, the re-assertion of things which the iconoclasts of Young China had threatened utterly to destroy. By this decision, as a *Times* correspondent in Peking justly observed, "the President practically proclaimed himself an autocratic ruler, who is responsible not to the nation, but to the Almighty alone." Yet even in so doing, Yuan was careful to have it suggested by his faithful Councillors that the Worship of Heaven was originally "Republican in spirit." And all the while, "in the profound seclusion of the Palace," he kept a firm grasp on the situation, gauging the force of public opinion from every quarter, timing every move in the game with the precision of a master-player, steadily increasing his hold over the provinces and their revenue-producing capacity. He knew—none better—that the loyalty of the majority of his supporters, and particularly of the army, was *au fond* a loyalty of loaves and fishes. He realised that his power to rule the Empire must ever depend on control of ready money sufficient to secure the removal or conversion of malcontents and to provide for the repression by force of widespread elements of disorder. As for the masses of the people, he declared his firm belief that they, like himself, were "no lovers of changes which run counter to immemorial custom"; for the rest, he knew that they cared not at all what the form or fashion of the Government may be, so long

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as it secured for them surcease of civil strife and reasonable security for life and property.

The Presidential mandates issued by Yuan Shih-k'ai at this period afforded striking proof of his profound knowledge of his countrymen and of his conviction that they would welcome the restoration of the autocratic form of government to which they were accustomed. These mandates afford also instructive example of the curious admixture of patriarchal philosophy and childish *naïveté* which characterises the Chinese mind (whether Young or Old) whenever it attempts to graft new wood of European origin upon the venerable tree of native statecraft. The avowed purpose of the most important of these mandates was "to lay the permanent foundations of the new constitution in China"; its immediate and practical result was to remove the last vestiges of constitutional procedure. "The most renowned scholars of East and West," it declared, "are agreed that, in framing a fundamental law, it is essential to bear in mind the condition of the people. No good can possibly come of cutting one's feet to fit a pair of shoes." So the shoes were made to fit the understandings of the day, good comfortable shoes, fashioned on the old dynastic last. The Presidential election law, promulgated in December 1914, conferred ten years of office on the President, who was to be eligible for re-election by a vote of two-thirds of the Administrative Council. To "prevent intrigue and strife," the President was empowered to nominate three persons, whose names were to be recorded and secreted upon a table of gold, one of whom was to succeed him in the event of his death.

Another mandate, issued in response to a memorial by the Censors, decreed that henceforth "no member of any political party shall be eligible for membership of Parliament." The Censors based their memorial on the lamentable fact that "China's recently dissolved Parliament became a laughing-stock, because all its members belonged to political parties. Among them

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were to be found men who degraded the profession of letters, men who indulged in windy rhetoric, who employed money, and even arms, to turn the country upside down. The parties used their collective strength to influence elections and usurp power." By the re-drafting of the Constitution, full powers were conferred upon the President to declare war and make treaties. In his hands, also, was placed supreme authority over the finances and armed forces of the country. Finally, a leaf was carefully selected from Great Britain's wait-and-see procedure of Parliamentary reform by the promise of a model Parliament, to consist of an Upper and a Lower House, to be elected and convened at some convenient season in the dim future.

Thus, out of the chaos left by the passing of the Manchus and the turmoil of the revolution, Yuan Shih-k'ai's genius of statesmanship, conforming strictly to the ancient classical model, succeeded in effectively restoring the authority of the metropolitan administration, with himself as its head, in the undisguised capacity of Dictator. Every stage in his intricate programme was silently and skilfully carried out with the polished smoothness of a conjuring performance, and the general effect on the audience was such as to completely justify those who hold that the Chinese people are in no sense fitted, or even anxious, for self-government. In other words, only under a benevolent form of despotism, conforming to the Confucian traditions of government, can law and order be maintained. By his very aloofness and dignified reticence, by his acute perception of the "happy mean" and pursuance of the lines of least resistance, by his masterly handling of semi-independent military chiefs and provincial officials, Yuan succeeded in establishing himself in the eyes of the people as the Man of Destiny, the only ruler in sight who could possibly hold in check the ever-present elements of disorder.

The divine right of monarchs in China being intimately bound up with the sacred institution of ancestor-

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worship, it is a matter of tradition that no new dynasty can rightfully claim the "mandate of Heaven" unless it has overthrown its predecessor by force of arms. It is safe to say that when Yuan struggled to retain the Manchu hierarchy in its place, as a figure-head shorn of despotic authority, he did so because he realised that the eventual restoration of the Throne was inevitable, and that grave dangers must confront the creation of a new Imperial House. Those dangers were undoubtedly lessened by the insidiously-gradual assertion of Yuan's autocratic authority, and by the fact that the people (including the Manchu clans) were thus led to regard him as the head of the State. Some of his methods were extremely "slim," and certain of his swift reprisals were barbarous, according to Western ideas, but all conformed to time-honoured precedents of Chinese rule, and therefore none aroused anything like popular indignation.

Yuan Shih-k'ai's subsequent attempt to restore the monarchical system of government in his own person merely carried his openly-avowed principles to their most natural conclusion. Neither by his actions nor by his utterances had he ever definitely abandoned those principles or modified his profound distrust of "changes which run counter to immemorial custom." Had the question of the monarchy been solved along the lines of classical tradition, as a matter of internal politics, it can hardly be doubted that Yuan, as Emperor, would have succeeded in establishing his effective authority to the general satisfaction and benefit of the Chinese people. Apart from the opposition of the Kuo-Min tang faction led by Sun Yat-sen—nationally speaking, not so important a factor in the situation as some foreign observers were led to believe—everything pointed to the probability that the nation, if left to itself, would have welcomed the restoration of the Monarchy, if only because the masses had come to associate the Republican doctrine with bloodshed and brigandage. The ruling class, the

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mandarin hierarchy, were clearly in sympathy with the restoration of the monarchical form of government.

But the question was not destined to be settled as a matter of internal politics. The plans of Yuan Shih-k'ai and his supporters failed to realise the dangers of foreign intervention, and particularly the interest evoked in Japan by any important change in China's affairs. The President's methods and mandates during the year preceding his acceptance of the Throne afforded striking proof of his profound knowledge of his countrymen, but they revealed also his inability to appreciate the international situation.

The movement for the restoration of the Monarchy, organised by the Chou-An-hui Society, began to assume a definite form a year after the outbreak of war in Europe, in August 1915. It failed conspicuously to take into account the significance of the demands which Japan had addressed to China, in settlement of her outstanding claims, after the expulsion of the Germans from Kiao-Chao. These demands, submitted to the Chinese Government in the form of a Protocol by Mr. Hioki on January 18, 1915, were unmistakably of a nature to emphasise the special rights and material interests claimed by Japan as the result of her victories. As *The Times* observed, "it was obvious to everybody, except, perhaps, to the Chinese statesmen, that Japan would probably make use of her opportunity to obtain some definite settlement of her many outstanding claims against her neighbour." We need not here recapitulate these claims or describe the subsequent negotiations which took place at Peking between January and May. It was recognised in England that certain of the "contingent" and questionable demands put forward (which were not communicated to the Allied Powers) were inspired by the exigencies of the internal political situation in Japan. The Okuma Government had been defeated in the Chamber and a General Election was impending, in which the Government had perforce to reckon with a strong popular demand

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for a more active "forward" policy in China. After four months of tedious negotiations at Peking (in which German intrigue played an important rôle by means of a systematic propaganda of falsehood in the Chinese Press) the Japanese Government presented an ultimatum to China (May 6) in which the "contingent" demands above mentioned were withdrawn and reserved for future discussion. Count Okuma's party had won the elections in March, but popular feeling was still strongly expressed on the subject of China, and the Government was being charged with vacillation and urged to employ military force to back its demands. On April 2, Count Okuma had taken occasion, through Reuter's correspondent, to declare that Japan's position and policy in her negotiations with China had been deliberately misrepresented, especially in America, as the result of false statements spread broadcast by German agents.

The attitude of Yuan Shih-k'ai throughout these negotiations was friendly but evasive; in refusing the greater part of the Japanese claims, he took his stand on the ground that it was not possible for the Chinese Government to concede any demands calculated to impair China's sovereignty or the Treaty rights of other Powers, an attitude which barred discussion of many of the questions which Japan had raised. He had also stipulated from the outset that Kiao-Chao should be completely restored to China and that China should be represented in the general peace negotiations after the war. In declining the finally modified demands of the Japanese Government on May 3, the Chinese Foreign Office expressed itself in a distinctly unconciliatory manner, revealing most inopportunely the traditional mandarin arrogance and contempt for Japan's claims to be treated as a great Power. In this attitude it was encouraged, no doubt, by Count Okuma's public declaration of pacific and reasonable intentions. When subsequently confronted with a forty-eight-hour ultimatum, however, Yuan Shih-k'ai and his advisers made the

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usual virtue of necessity and promptly yielded. By the terms of the settlement thus effected, Japan regularised and consolidated her position in Shantung (in succession to the Germans), in South Manchuria, Eastern Inner Mongolia, and on the coast of Fukhien province.

Yuan Shih-k'ai's diplomacy had brought him thus far fairly successfully through a difficult situation; but his usual astuteness was lacking when he failed to draw from these negotiations the obvious conclusion that, in the matter of his personal ambitions to found a new dynasty, he would have to reckon seriously with the Japanese Government. He had never been *persona grata* in Japan since the days when, as Li Hung Chang's lieutenant and Resident in Korea, he had opposed Japanese policy and supported that of Russia; he might well have foreseen that the Government at Tokyo would discourage any attempt on his part to establish himself upon the Throne of China. He was certainly not without warning on this score. One of the ablest and most influential writers in China, the famous scholar Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, who had served as Minister of Justice in Yuan's first Cabinet during the crisis of 1911, and had then strongly supported the maintenance of the Monarchy together with a constitutional form of government, retired from the State Council in August 1915, and openly denounced the monarchical movement on broad principles of national policy. In September he published his opinions on the subject in a series of articles in the *Peking Gazette*. His objections to Yuan's accession to the Throne were based partly on grounds of classical orthodoxy and partly on recognition of the certainty of Japan's intervention. Regarding the matter from the point of view of historical precedents, ever dear to the mind of the *literati*, he observed that public opinion would undoubtedly support the President's accession to the Throne "if he had first defeated a foreign foe in a decisive battle." There being no immediate prospect of this solution, he laid stress on the fact that "full recognition of the Monarchy was

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not likely to be accorded to China by certain Powers until after the Peace Conference of Europe has concluded its business." Referring specifically to Japan, he observed that "the country which has the loudest voice in our affairs is that which lies close to our elbow," and predicted that "if this country has occasion to consider the question of recognition, it will also have occasion to interfere. Even a little child," he concluded, "can foresee that Japan will not recognise the new Government without demanding the concession of further privileges, which China dare not refuse." Yuan Shih-k'ai was undoubtedly impressed by the views of this famous writer. He recognised their far-reaching influence, and made every effort to enlist Liang Ch'i-ch'ao's support and to persuade him to speak smooth things; but in vain.

In October the State Council made a show of constitutional procedure by referring the question of the Monarchy to a vote of the provinces, or rather to a number of individuals selected by the President and his supporters to represent them. In due course, on October 30, the expected happened. The Japanese Minister at Peking, accompanied by his British and Russian colleagues, called at the Chinese Foreign Office and offered friendly advice on behalf of his Government against the restoration of the monarchical system. He pointed out that while Europe was at war it would be dangerous for China to make changes likely to create internal dissensions; for this reason his Government respectfully advised the President temporarily to postpone the projected change. The Foreign Minister replied that the Chinese Government had no reason to anticipate serious opposition in the provinces, and that, having referred the question to the decision of the people, they must abide by the issue, whatever it might be. The issue, of which there never was any doubt, was a practically unanimous "vote" in favour of Yuan's accession (November 5). Yuan Shih-k'ai's attitude at

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this juncture plainly intimated his conviction that the danger of foreign intervention in China's domestic affairs would not be increased or diminished by any change in the form of the Government. He believed, indeed, that the pre-occupation of the European Powers in the war had greatly lessened the chance of such intervention, and he evidently under-estimated the risk of serious opposition being organised against him in China. As regards Japan, he appears to have thought that active intervention from that quarter would strengthen his hands and gain for him the support of patriotic opinion, even among the Young China revolutionaries. In deference to further representations from the Japanese Minister and his colleagues, he directed the Minister for Foreign Affairs to state that the Government was in a position to deal with opposition in China, but that it must depend on the good offices of foreign Governments to control revolutionaries domiciled outside its jurisdiction—an unmistakable reference to the support given in Japan to Sun Yat-sen, Huang Hsing, and other political agitators. Here, again, Yuan's courage was greater than his wisdom; for his experience during the revolution of 1911 and on many other occasions should have reminded him that revolutions in China are rather a matter of money than of political ideals, and that a handful of energetic men, provided with sufficient dollars, could get the rabble army of any province to move in any and every direction. On November 9 the Chinese Government, while adhering to its intentions, announced that no change in the system of government would take place before the New Year.

On December 6 came the first mutterings of the storm which eventually put an end to Yuan Shih-k'ai and all his ambitions. A Government cruiser lying off the Arsenal at Shanghai was seized by a party of thirty revolutionaries, chiefly naval students; but the affair was purely local, and the subsequent proceedings on both sides savoured of *opéra bouffe*. Thereupon the State

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Council memorialised the President to put an end to the prevalent uncertainty and unrest by proclaiming himself Emperor without further delay. After the customary face-saving protestations of unworthiness, Yuan Shih-k'ai complied, and on December 12 the Monarchy was proclaimed. The coronation ceremony was fixed for February 9. But it was not to be.

Within a week after the issue of the mandate announcing Yuan's accession came rumours of a serious insurrection brewing in the far-western province of Yünnan, organised and led by Tsai Ao, a military official educated in Japan, whom Yuan had appointed to the military governorship of the province after the revolution. On December 27 the revolutionary leaders and gentry of Yünnan declared the independence of their province, in opposition to the Monarchy, and Tsai Ao dispatched a rabble army, estimated at 30,000 men, against the Imperial forces which had been hurriedly sent to Szechuan. Despite initial successes gained by the Government, the insurrectionary movement spread rapidly; it was bound to do so, in view of the fact that in nearly every province there were bodies of unpaid and undisciplined troops, under generals of doubtful loyalty, eager for opportunities of looting. By the end of January the provinces of Kueichou and Kwangsi had renounced their allegiance. Yuan's star was now visibly declining, and his supporters, following the cautious custom of their class, were deserting him. When his right-hand man, Feng Kuo-chang, the Commander-in-Chief at Nanking, declined to support him, and bodies of the Imperial troops began to make common cause with the rebels, his friends at the capital persuaded him to issue an official announcement (January 22) that the establishment of the Monarchy would be indefinitely postponed. But the step came too late. In China nothing fails like failure, and Yuan, as aspirant Emperor, could never hope to command from the *literati* the same kind of blind loyalty which the best type of classical Confucianists displayed for the



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Manchu dynasty, even in its decline. By the end of March the tide of ill-fortune was running so strongly against him that his few remaining friends urged him to abdicate the Presidency and retire into private life. A month later the provinces of Kuangtung and Kiangsi had joined the hue and cry; Yuan was denounced as a traitor and usurper by the representatives of the same provinces which had urged him to ascend the Throne six months before. The remnants of his army were isolated and helpless in far-off Szechuan, the provincial Treasuries had suspended all remittances to Peking, and his act of renunciation had merely served to intensify the vindictive feelings and personal ambitions of his adversaries. His position was clearly impossible; even amidst his own protégés of the Court faction there were few to do reverence to the Strong Man who had failed. On April 22, hoping still to retrieve something of the desperate situation, Yuan agreed to surrender all civil authority to the Cabinet, reconstructed under the Premiership of Tuan Chi-jui, who came to the front at this juncture. Tuan had been Yuan's Minister of War in 1913, when he had displayed much energy and ability in defeating the abortive "campaign to punish Yuan," launched by Sun Yat-sen and his revolutionary friends. Despite his conservative and monarchical tendencies, he was popular with the leaders of the southern faction; an able diplomatist, and credited by his friends with unusual nimbleness of opinion in politics. Upon his accession to the Premiership, his Cabinet proceeded to placate the southern party by announcing its intention of re-establishing Parliamentary Government at an early date. Meanwhile the southern Kuo-Min tang leaders had proclaimed Li Yuan-hung, the Vice-President of the Republic, as President, and had constituted themselves into a new Provisional Government at Canton, without reference to Peking. What would have been the ultimate fate of Yuan Shih-k'ai under these conditions, none can say; he solved all such problems by dying on June 5. The

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medical men who attended him ascribed his death to kidney trouble and nervous prostration; the man in the street at Peking said, with equal truth, that he died of "eating bitterness" and loss of face. Officialdom at Peking appeased its conscience, and possibly placated the soul of the departed, by a State funeral on a most imposing scale.

Yuan Shih-k'ai having passed to his rest, Li Yuan-hung became President of the Chinese Republic, with Tuan Chi-jui as Premier. The country, or rather the vernacular Press, expressed great relief at the change and confidence in the early establishment of law and order under the beneficent direction of a constitutional Government. But if ever, when in disgrace with fortune, Yuan may have had misgivings as to the wisdom and patriotism of his own policy, his august shade had not long to wait by the Yellow Springs of Hades to see them amply justified, and his words fulfilled concerning the need for benevolent despotism and the evils of government under a "rampant democracy." The late Dictator had not been dead a month before it became apparent at Peking that only a strong hand of absolute authority could hope to impose a stable government upon the conflicting policies and ambitions of the semi-independent military chieftains and amateur politicians who now aspired to rule the country. Many experienced observers had foreseen that the substitution of the Dictator's rule for that of a number of jealous provincial governors would mean chaos, and they were right.

With Yuan passed the last of the super-mandarins of the old régime and the last hope of an early restoration of stable government in China.

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## CHAPTER III

### CHINA JOINS IN THE WORLD WAR

THE passing of Yuan left the Central Government's finances in a parlous state and the administration completely disorganised. A month before his death the Government banks at Peking had suspended specie payments and the military leaders were fiercely clamouring for money. Tuan Chi-jui and the new Cabinet formed at the end of June, containing representatives of all parties, hoped to restore the fiscal machinery by convening the Parliament of 1913 for August 1 and by other measures calculated to conciliate the Kuo-Min tang leaders. The Cantonese section, however, showed no signs of willingness to co-operate with the new Government. On July 8 Admiral Li Ting-hsin published a manifesto at Shanghai, in which he declared that the Navy was determined to prevent the domination of the country by the militarists and monarchists who still controlled the administration; behind the Navy was Tang Shao-yi, who had been a staunch monarchist under the Manchus and one of Yuan Shih-k'ai's ablest lieutenants in the Chihli Viceroyalty, but now a leader of Kuangtung irreconcilables. Tang Shao-yi and his friends demanded the immediate revival of the Provisional Constitution drawn up by the Republican leaders at Nanking in 1911. Tuan Chi-jui endeavoured to win over this very able but fractious official by making him Minister for Foreign Affairs in the new Cabinet, but Tang declined the honour. The proceedings at the reopening of Parliament on August 1 showed clearly that the opposition of the Kuo-Min tang to Peking had not ended with the Monarchy, but that it would continue



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to be actively organised against the so-called Military Party and its leader, the Premier, Tuan Chi-jui. The Military Governors, on their side, who actually dominated the situation, were willing to give the Parliamentarians an opportunity of justifying their political existence, but they were frankly sceptical as to the utility of an institution which in the past had confined its constructive statesmanship to voting £600 a year to each of its members. From the outset it was clear that the life of the resuscitated Parliament would depend upon the good pleasure of the Military Governors and upon funds being made available for the generous maintenance of their armies.

For the remainder of the year the financial problem continued to be serious, though somewhat relieved by the increasingly satisfactory results of the Salt Gabelle under Sir Richard Dane. In the spring of 1917 the question of China's entering the war on the side of the Allies came to be seriously considered by the Chinese Cabinet. Tuan Chi-jui had for some time past been in favour of this course, because he realised that it would not only improve China's political position, and entitle her to a voice in the ultimate settlement of Far Eastern affairs, but that it would greatly alleviate the country's financial situation. When, therefore, at the beginning of February, the U.S. Minister at Peking invited the Chinese Government to follow the example of the United States by formally protesting against the illegality and barbarism of Germany's submarine campaign, and by severing diplomatic relations, the seed fell upon ground well prepared. On February 9 the Chinese Government replied to the German Note announcing the unlimited submarine campaign, by an energetic protest, and an intimation that if the protest were disregarded diplomatic relations would be broken off. But Tuan Chi-jui and his friends were not to have their undisputed way in this matter. As usual, the question became rapidly involved in a network of internal politics, in which German intrigue played no inconsiderable part and German money secured the

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support of a considerable faction. The result, as usual, was a Ministerial crisis, in which the President's and the Premier's views came into sharp conflict. Tuan Chi-jui's supporters, all for immediate and energetic action, were opposed by the President on the ground that the matter was one for the decision of Parliament; their action was fiercely attacked and their motives impugned by the German-subsidised Press. At the outset their position was somewhat weakened by the delay which took place in the severance of relations between the United States and Germany, and by the failure of the Allies to convey any collective intimation to China that her intervention in the war would be welcome. This deficiency was remedied, however, on February 28, when the Allied Ministers at Peking presented a memorandum to the Chinese Government expressing sympathy with its action in regard to Germany and promising, in the event of diplomatic relations being severed, to consider favourably the suspension of the Boxer indemnity payments and a revision of the Chinese Customs tariff. Germany, on her side, was spending money freely at several military headquarters, and had offered to wipe out several outstanding financial claims against China, in the hope of avoiding a rupture. Tuan's Cabinet, after referring the matter to the political leaders at Peking and in the provinces, decided on March 2 to sever relations with Germany and to instruct the provincial authorities accordingly. President Li Yuan-hung, however, declined to sign these instructions, whereupon Tuan Chi-jui resigned. But the majority of Parliament and nearly all the leading politicians were against the President; Tuan could also count upon the energetic support of the Military Governors. After twenty-four hours' reflection the President gave way, whereupon Tuan withdrew his resignation and proceeded to lay the facts of the situation before a meeting of representatives of both Houses of Parliament. On March 11 Parliament voted for the severance of relations with Germany. They were severed on the 14th, and on

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the same date the German ships at Shanghai and Amoy were seized by the Chinese authorities.

So far so good. But neither China nor the Allies could hope to derive advantages from the steps thus taken commensurate with their importance unless and until they were carried to their logical conclusion by a declaration of war against the Central Powers. There was never any serious difference of opinion among the various political and military factions at Peking as to the advisability of China throwing in her lot with the Powers fighting against the menace of Prussian militarism. Differences of interests there undoubtedly were, and factional jealousies which became actually intensified by the prospect of a Central Government at Peking relieved of its most pressing financial burdens; but never any vital differences of principles or national policy. Despite the feverish activity of German propaganda, educated opinion throughout China had slowly but surely come to appreciate the objects and methods of German *kultur* and to regard them with repugnance. The Chinese people are accustomed, as the result of the many invasions and rebellions that have ravaged their country, to the savageries of bandit warfare, to the looting of cities and the slaughter of unoffending citizens, but their history contains no record of cold-blooded barbarism to equal Germany's deliberate policy of ruthless warfare waged against civilians. Even more than by the sinking of neutral merchant ships, the *literati* were impressed by the Germans' violations of international law in Belgium, by their wholesale deportation of defenceless Belgians into captivity and forced labour; and all their humane and religious instincts were particularly outraged by the horrible callousness displayed by the Germans in their treatment of their dead.

The Chinese Cabinet's war policy was, therefore, approved in principle by Parliament, and generally endorsed throughout the country, at the end of March. A conference of military leaders held at Peking on April 26

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voted for an immediate declaration of war; six days later the Cabinet passed a unanimous resolution to the same effect. On May 10 the matter was brought up for debate in the Lower House of Parliament. The result showed clearly that, while there was no genuine opposition to the war, the Parliamentarians, with the President behind them, were determined to treat the question as an opportunity for an attack upon Tuan Chi-jui and the military party. How far German threats and bribes were factors in this determination, remains necessarily a matter for conjecture, but both undoubtedly carried a certain amount of weight with the Opposition. On May 19 a resolution was adopted by Parliament declaring that, while not opposed to the entry of China into the war, the House would refuse to consider the question until the Cabinet had been reconstructed. In other words, the situation was to be determined, not by the merits of the national policy proposed, but by gratifying the envy and jealousy of politicians. All parties recognised quite clearly the moral and material advantages which the Chinese Government might expect to gain by declaring war on the Central Powers (the abolition of indemnity and loan interest payments to Germany alone represented a sum of £6000 a day), but the Opposition, headed by the Kuo-Min tang, was not disposed to see those advantages secured by Tuan Chi-jui and the Military Governors without a struggle.

The struggle accordingly took place. It involved in its three months' course the dismissal of Parliament by order of the Military Governors, the resignation of the President, and, finally, an abortive restoration of the Manchu dynasty and a comic-opera battle between Republican-Monarchists and the Monarchist-Republicans around and about the Forbidden City. Following immediately upon Parliament's demand for a reconstruction of the Cabinet, the President decided upon a new trial of strength with his masterful Premier. He proceeded to reconstruct the Cabinet by obtaining the resignation or

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by the dismissal of all its members except Tuan himself. But the Cabinet, thus reduced to one, adhered firmly to its position, and declined to renounce its policy; it urged the President to dissolve Parliament, plainly hinting that the Military Governors, determined to secure the declaration of war, had no intention of leaving Peking until he had done so. On May 23 President Li (apparently supported by a section of the Military Party) took his courage in both hands and dismissed the Premier. Tuan announced his intention to defy the mandate, and proceeded to confer with his friends at Tientsin. A week later the Military Governors of several provinces north of the Yangtsze declared their independence of the Central Government. The attitude of Vice-President Feng Kuo-Chang at this juncture was, as usual, one of benevolent neutrality, and the solution of the crisis seemed therefore to rest with General Chang Hsün, the genial swashbuckler of Shantung, who had made a name for himself as a military Vicar of Bray under the Manchus and during the revolution. In the south, Sun Yat-sen, Tang Shao-yi, and other Kuo-Min tang leaders were loudly denouncing Tuan and his supporters as exponents of militarism, and calling on all patriots to rally to the defence of Parliament and the people's liberties. Their voice was the voice of Young China, but too often there was reason to believe that the unseen hand was the insidious hand of Potsdam's agents *in partibus*.

The Military Governors, after accusing the President and Parliament of trying to destroy the responsible Cabinet system, cut short further argument about constitutional principles by nominating a Provisional Government of their own at Tientsin, with Hsü Shih-chang (an amiable septuagenarian, ex-guardian of the Manchu heir-apparent) cast for the dummy rôle of Dictator. President Li's position had now become difficult and dangerous. General Nieh, Military Governor of Anhui, defined it succinctly by stating that he would be allowed to retain office only on condition of submitting to the Military Party

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and dissolving Parliament. He added, with curious frankness, that if General Chang Hsün went to Peking, it would not be to make peace between President and Premier, but to restore the Manchus. On June 12, Chang Hsün arrived at the capital, preceded by a " body-guard " of several thousand men. He came ostensibly as mediator, but it was observed that his troops proceeded to occupy the Fengtai railway junction and other strategic points. His mediation proved rapidly effective: on the day after his arrival the President dissolved Parliament by mandate.

No sooner had Chang Hsün emerged as the central figure on the stage than there were signs of trouble and dissension between him and certain of his colleagues in the Military Party. At this juncture, the question of declaring war against Germany was temporarily relegated by common consent to the background of practical politics; public attention became completely engrossed in the clash of personal ambitions at Peking. Tuan Chi-jui remained at Tientsin watching events; a new Premier had been elected by Parliament (Li Ching-hsi, a son of Li Hung-chang), but so far he had declined to assume office and seemed rather disposed to support the action of that section of the Military Party which demanded the rein-statement of Tuan. The leaders of the Kuo-Min tang in the dissolved Parliament had made haste to depart for the South, where the Press was proclaiming an irreparable breach with the North, and the Navy, manned chiefly by southerners, made no secret of its intention to oppose Peking and the Military Governors.

This tangled situation was rendered still more complicated, and the President's anti-war policy temporarily strengthened, by a Note handed to the Chinese Government by the American Minister at Peking on June 6, in which the U.S. Government deplored the growth of internal dissensions in China and intimated that the restoration of national unity and a stable administration was even more important than the declaration of war by

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China against Germany. This advice was morally justified, no doubt, by the facts of the situation; nevertheless, it had several obviously weak points which made it politically unsound. In the first place, it conflicted sharply with the advice tendered from Washington only two months before; in the second, it was calculated (as a Reuter message from Tokyo promptly observed) to accentuate the existing party strife at Peking, for the reason that the President's faction would naturally regard it as an intimation that the U.S. Government was opposed to the policy of Premier Tuan and his adherents. A considerable section of public opinion in Japan regarded this Note as unjustifiable under the circumstances and likely to do more harm than good. The fact that, since his accession to power as Premier, Tuan Chi-jui's policy had been framed and carried out in close touch with Japan, was a factor in the situation that could not be ignored: it was, indeed, Young China's chief political reason for denouncing him and his military supporters. Everything justifies the assumption that Tuan's policy in this matter was largely due to his intelligent observation of the causes that had contributed to the downfall of Yuan Shih-k'ai, and to the prudent advice of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao—to recognition, in fact, of Japan's predominant position in the Far East and of her material interests in China. Sun Yat-sen and his friends of the Kuo-Min tang had frequently recognised that position and those interests, when it suited them to do so, in the past, and most notably when they sought and obtained material assistance from Japan in the revolution of 1911. This, however, did not prevent them now from denouncing Tuan Chi-jui as a tool of the Government at Tokyo and accusing him of having made a secret agreement prejudicial to China with Japan, as the price of her support for the military-monarchist party.

The "mediation" of General Chang Hsün, as events proved, was not intended to promote either the policy of the President or that of the Premier. There was German

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money behind him, no doubt, and had his *coup de main* been successful, there would have been little prospect of China's joining the Allies; but his immediate object was the restoration of the Manchu dynasty in the form of a Regency administered by himself as Viceroy of Chihli. During the eighteen days that elapsed between the arrival of his advance guard at the Temple of Heaven and his proclamation of the restoration of the Dragon Throne (July 1), General Chang Hsün continued to mediate, for form's sake, with the President. The result of these *pourparlers* was that, by June 24, Li Ching-hsi had agreed to assume the Premiership for three months, and the President had consented to a conservative re-drafting of the Constitution, a considerable restriction of his own powers, and the election of a new Parliament with reduced membership. These things being settled, the Military Governors of Honan, Shantung, Chihli, and Fengtien agreed to withdraw their troops and rescind their declaration of independence. Things seemed to be shaping towards an amicable settlement in accordance with the wishes of the Military Party; but, as a matter of fact, every inn-keeper and muleteer in Peking knew that something more important than these face-saving negotiations was afoot, and that the Son of Heaven, after five years' dignified detachment in the profound seclusion of his palace, was about to be brought back, and the Dragon Throne restored to its ancient pride of place. There is no possible doubt that the restoration of the Manchu dynasty as a Constitutional Monarchy had been discussed and approved by the Military Governors, including Tuan Chi-jui, at their several conferences at Hsü-chou-fu in 1916; the failure of Chang Hsün's colleagues to support him and the restored Throne in July 1917, was not due to any Republican sympathies on their part, but solely to the fact that Chang Hsün, a blunt, ambitious soldier and no politician, had stolen a march on his associates and could by no means be permitted to reap the fruits thereof. More than one of the dignitaries who pledged

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themselves to support the restoration of the Manchus has since admitted that the plot broke down because of General Chang's insistence on being rewarded with the Viceroyalty of Chihli, a post to which both Tuan Chi-jui and Tsao Kun aspired.

His Majesty, the boy Hsüan Tung and the remnants of the Imperial Manchu family, in the tranquil recesses of the palace, had certainly no hand in the plot. When, after six days of brief eminence (more emphasised in the European and American Press than in his own capital), he returned once more to the enjoyment of the stately dignities and ceremonial etiquette of his Court without a kingdom, the triumphant "Republican" generals published a communication from the Emperor in the *Peking Gazette*, explaining that he, being only a boy, had been unable to prevent General Chang Hsün from issuing edicts in his name, but that the authority of the House of Ching had been wrongfully invoked and abused.

It was on July 1 that, following the precedent for similar *coups d'état* established by Her Majesty the Empress Dowager Tzŭ-Hsi, General Chang Hsün dragged the reluctant young Emperor from his bed at three o'clock in the morning. Forthwith the city bedecked itself with Dragon flags, by order of the police (the very fact that they were available gives cause for reflection), and within twenty-four hours the old order was peacefully re-established. It has already been said that Chang Hsün was no politician: he now proved it by a tactless assumption of supreme authority, conferring the highest honours in the land indiscriminately and without consulting the recipients, and by assuming that the Military Governors' avowed sympathy for the Monarchy would lead them to support it under his direction. Therein he erred, chiefly because (as *The Times* correspondent justly said) he himself was an "outsider," almost an accident, in the Councils of the Peiyang Military Party. Tuan Chi-jui now emerged from his retirement at Tientsin, and promptly put himself at the head of an army determined

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to vindicate the Republic and to "exterminate Chang Hsün as a criminal and a robber." In this object he was supported by the Vice-President, Feng Kuo-chang, commanding the Republican army of the south, and by other generals who, as a matter of common knowledge, had all been good, staunch monarchists a year before. Not without justice was Chang Hsün's pathetic plaint for mediation addressed to the Foreign Ministers. When he found himself out-numbered and cornered, he said that, in restoring the Emperor to the Throne, he had acted in complete good faith, hoping to put a stop to the country's internal dissensions, and having every reason to expect support "from his pledged associates, with whom he was now forced to do battle." His troops realised, just as readily as their leader, that there was little advantage to be gained by endeavouring to maintain an untenable position; the defence of the Monarchy was therefore half-hearted and desultory. On July 12 the defenders of the Imperial City capitulated, upon an amicable understanding that they were to receive three months' pay, money down. The total casualties, including a small number amongst the Legation Guards and foreign civilians, amounted to twenty-five killed and forty-five wounded. Before retiring upon his last position in the Imperial City, Chang Hsün had asked the Foreign Legations to mediate, and had threatened, if pushed to extremities, to publish the minutes of one of the conferences at Hsüchow-fu, at which, he said, both Tuan Chi-jui and Feng Kuo-chang had promised to support the restoration of the Manchus. Chang Hsün, after escaping to the refuge of the Dutch Legation, with the help of some of his Austrian friends, was permitted to retire into private life and left in enjoyment of his property.[1]

[1] Since the collapse of the Anfu party last summer he has once more emerged, to play a prominent part in Peking politics, as friend and henchman of the great Chang Tso-lin, while Tuan Chi-jui takes his turn in prosperous and dignified retirement. In China, as in England, the fulminations of one party politician against another are usually stage thunder.

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This semi-farcical restoration escapade proved in its conclusion to be a blessing in disguise, inasmuch as it expedited and facilitated the establishment of a strong Cabinet under Tuan Chi-jui (who now returned to resume the Premiership) and practically ensured the declaration of war by China against Germany. President Li Yuan-hung, who had fled for refuge to the Japanese Legation on the proclamation of the Monarchy, finally declined to resume a post for which he had never displayed any inclination or real fitness, and which Tuan Chi-jui triumphant would have made very uncomfortable for him. On July 18 it was announced, to the very general relief of those who feared further internal dissensions, that Vice-President General Feng Kuo-chang had agreed to accept the Presidency, and that he would co-operate in the policy of Premier Tuan. For some days it had also been feared that General Feng, an opportunist of the wait-and-see order, might elect to throw in his lot with Tuan's adversaries, the Kuo-Min tang leaders, and the Navy in the south. The Kuo-Min tang had published a manifesto at Shanghai in which they declared themselves opposed to Tuan, for the same reason which had led them to favour his policy of war against Germany—namely, that they disliked all exponents and supporters of militarism. The Navy had issued a similar document, declaring the Government at Peking to be illegally constituted, and demanding the immediate convocation of Parliament. Had Feng Kuo-chang and his army taken sides with the southerners, Tuan Chi-jui's chances of organising a Central Government would have been problematical. Observers on the spot had reason for grave misgivings on this score, because it was well known that, apart from the chronic jealousies that exist between the Peking and Nanking administrations, there had never been much love lost between Generals Tuan and Feng.

The return to power of Tuan, practically in the position of a Dictator, made it certain that China's diplomatic rupture with Germany would now be followed by a

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declaration of war, involving not only the sequestration of German property and the internment or deportation of German subjects, but also the systematic uprooting of German financial and commercial interests throughout the country. It was not long before the Premier, having formed his Cabinet on conciliatory and moderate lines, gave evidence of his intentions in this matter. Having ascertained General Feng's willingness to accept the Presidency, he informed the Allied Ministers that, upon the latter's arrival in Peking and assumption of office, the Cabinet would proceed to declare war; in the meanwhile, he intimated that it would greatly strengthen his hands if the Allied Powers, in fulfilment of their promises, would make a definite declaration of the financial and other advantages which they were prepared to concede to China. On more than one occasion since March, the representatives of Great Britain, Japan, and the United States had assured the Chinese Government that the Allies would treat China generously as regards the suspension of the Boxer indemnity and the revision of the Customs tariff; and the Chinese, on their side, had expressed their readiness to declare war against Germany without making a specific bargain, relying upon the Allies' promise of fair treatment. Nevertheless, bearing in mind the number of Powers concerned in the indemnity question, and their possibly conflicting interests, it was only natural that Tuan and his supporters should desire, before taking the final and irrevocable step, to receive assurances of a kind that would give confidence to waverers and prevent effective criticism by their opponents. Owing chiefly to the situation in Russia, it was not possible for the Allied Governments, however well disposed, to come quickly to a common understanding in these matters. Recognising this fact, and being urged by the Japanese and British Governments to rely upon the good faith of the Allies, Tuan decided to face the risk of the Kuo-Min tang's opposition, and to proceed to declare war against the Central Powers.

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Feng Kuo-chang arrived in Peking on August 1; his assumption of the Presidency greatly strengthened the position and prestige of the Central Government. A few days before, Sun Yat-sen and his extremist friends had issued a proclamation in Kuangtung, refusing to recognise orders from Peking and proposing that Parliament should meet under a Provisional Government at Canton; but without men or money behind them, the fulminations of the Kuo-Min tang leaders might well be disregarded. The strength of Tuan's position in dealing with the southern revolutionary element and the professional agitators of Young China lay chiefly in his good understanding with the Japanese Government; for the first time since the Russo-Japanese War, the Central Government at Peking might confidently expect the Japanese authorities in China and Japan to discourage any further attempts at treasonable conspiracies and sedition in the central and southern provinces. In this assurance Tuan Chi-jui and his Cabinet proceeded, therefore, to carry out their policy, and on August 3 unanimously resolved on declaring war against the Central Powers. The formal declaration took place on August 14.

Had it not been for the peculiar qualities of jealousy and intrigue which habitually dominate politics in Eastern countries, public opinion, so far as it exists in China, would undoubtedly have brought about the declaration of war at the same time, and for the same reasons, that the United States threw in her lot with the Allies. Internal politics intervened, as has been shown, to prevent this. To a certain extent it may be admitted that President Li Yuan-hung and those who supported his policy of neutrality were influenced by considerations of a prudent and patriotic nature, and unaffected by the atmosphere of intrigue, intimidation, and bribery which emanated from Germany's diplomatic, consular, financial, and secret-service agents. President Li himself, for example, was certainly much influenced by fear of the effects of the revolution in Russia, a fear which he frankly confessed,



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and which outweighed in his judgment the help which the Allies might expect to receive from the United States. But, broadly speaking, the opposition to President Tuan's war policy was due to German instigation, and maintained by a considerable expenditure of German money.

The last manifestation of internal politics with which Tuan Chi-jui had to contend, viz. Chang Hsün's *coup d'état*, was undoubtedly "made in Germany." As events proved, however, it turned out to the advantage both of Premier Tuan and of the Allies, who desired to see China closed to the activities of German agents. So long as the President and the Premier at Peking were divided in counsel, there could be no hope of establishing anything in the nature of a strong Central Government, in which lay China's only hope of peaceful progress and stability. Chang Hsün's blundering attempt to restore the Manchus enabled Tuan Chi-jui to make a fresh start, with every prospect of financial solvency and of assistance from the Powers best able to give the Central Government effective support, moral and material.

By an agreement between the Consortium banks at Peking (excluding the German) it was arranged, upon China's declaration of war, that the Chinese Government should receive an immediate loan of 10,000,000 *yen* for general administrative purposes, secured against the Salt Gabelle revenues. The Chinese Government, having many claims to meet at home and abroad, would have liked to borrow on a much larger scale, but in their own interests they were advised that, with exchange at its then high level, it would be folly to do so. As the result of the war in Europe, and of China's participation therein, she was now placed in a financial position which, had it been wisely and honestly handled, would soon have enabled her to recover complete stability. Her internal resources were increased and her foreign obligations reduced. Under these conditions, it was to be hoped that the Allies would agree to discourage the Chinese Government from any further dalliance on the primrose path of borrowing,

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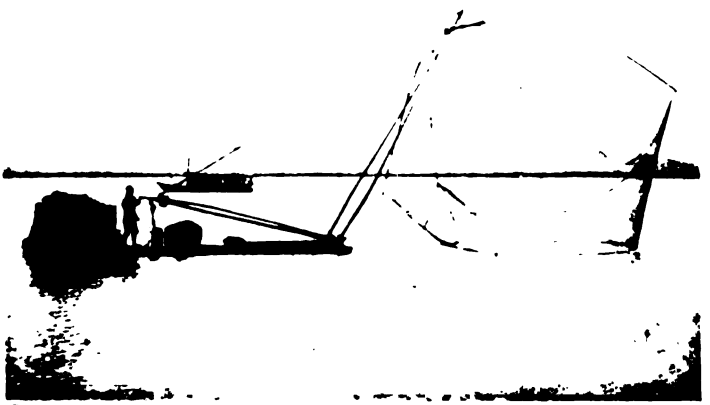
*B. T. Prideaux*]

ASCENDING THE RAPIDS, HWEI RIVER, CHEKIANG.



*B. T. Prideaux*]

A FISHERMAN OF THE WHANGPOO.

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and urge them to take advantage of the existing most favourable conditions to set their house in order and to make timely provision for emergencies, to tabulate and regulate all internal loans and financial claims; above all, to take steps for the disbandment of irregular armed forces in the provinces and the centralisation of military authority in a national army under the Ministry of War. As will be shown hereafter, no matter how great the country's resources, they can never be sufficient for its needs so long as independent bodies of troops are allowed to levy taxes on their own account and to claim payment for making (or for not making) attacks on the established order of things. Coincident with the elimination of Germany, chief mischief-maker, China had an opportunity, such as she had never enjoyed before, for working out her own salvation. She had a fair field and much favour; a splendid and unexpected opportunity for proving to the world, without let or hindrance, Young China's capacity for efficient self-determination and patriotic effort. But this opportunity has been lost, frittered away in futile strife, consumed by the greed and inefficiency of politicians of all professions, old and new. To what a state they have since brought the finances and administration of the country is matter of common knowledge.

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE REPUBLIC OF TO-DAY

DURING the winter of 1919–1920 I made a rapid journey through North China, Manchuria, Korea, and Japan. The sole purpose of this journey was to investigate on the spot the changes brought about by the World War and by recent political events in these countries; to discuss the situation in all its bearings with the men best qualified to take a broad-minded view of its facts and needs; and finally to offer, if possible, through the Press, some practical suggestions with a view to averting the immediate dangers which threaten China from within and without. Beyond my duty to *The Times* and certain other newspapers, I had no mission, nor received any remuneration whatsoever, from any quarter. Having no political objects to serve, I may claim to have studied the situation, if not with impartiality, at least with complete independence, and to set forth the truth, as I see it, without fear or favour. But not without affection, for I must plead guilty to very sincere feelings of kindly sympathy for the long-suffering and lovable Chinese people, amongst whom the best years of my life have been spent.

I make no apology for this personal statement, for the reason that the vernacular Press controlled by Young China at the Treaty Ports, and especially the organs of its irreconcilable malcontents at Canton, have been at pains to declare that my opinions on the situation were untrustworthy, because I was "in the paid service of a certain foreign Power whose militaristic policy is antagonistic to the national aspirations of the Young China party"—meaning, thereby, Japan. Referring particularly to my views on the ever-thorny subject of centralised



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finance, as reported at an interview in Shanghai, the *Chung hua Pao* characteristically observed that they were inspired by the hope of obtaining a lucrative post as financial controller at Peking. Scurrilous falsehoods of this kind are unfortunately common currency amongst the hot-headed and half-educated youths who now claim to represent and guide public opinion in China; and one cannot afford to ignore them entirely, because the utterances of these journals, which live by and for agitation and sedition, are widely circulated abroad, by means of the "Asiatic News Agency," and thus achieve a fictitious importance, especially in the United States. On my return from the East, *via* America, I found at San Francisco unmistakable evidence of the far-reaching influence of this poisonous Press work.

The wrath of the Cantonese politicians and of their jackals of the Press was aroused on this occasion by the public expression of my firm belief—a belief which is now widely shared by responsible Chinese and foreigners throughout the East—that, unless a way can be found to make the provinces sink their differences and unite in patriotic support of a centralised government, nothing but international control of the country's finances can save China from bankruptcy and disruption. I had also declared my conviction that nothing had done more to prevent the restoration of political equilibrium of law and order, under a strong central authority, than the ascendancy in public affairs of the student class, and particularly that undisciplined section of it which combines crude ideas of Republicanism with a smattering of Western science. To any one who is not blinded by sentimental delusions or self-interest, the course of events during the past five years has brought home the obvious fact that unless a stable and effective government can be established speedily at Peking, foreign control of China's finances is inevitable, in China's own interest. And since the passing of Yuan Shih-k'ai, the hope of establishing such a government has become more remote

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with each passing year. The vision of a New China, regenerate and invigorated by means of democratic institutions, so widely proclaimed after the triumph of the revolution, was a delusion for which the Chinese were less to blame than the foreigners in their midst, who inspired and encouraged it. That vision was bound to prove a mirage, for the simple reason that the instinct and capacity for representative government is still lacking in the Chinese people.

Since it is the Cantonese section of Young China which is ever loudest and most insistent in proclaiming its own virtues and demanding sympathy for its political programmes, let us cast a passing glance at the present condition of the two Kuang provinces, those fruitful breeding-grounds of unrest and rebellion, and, lest we be charged with prejudice in the matter, let us take the evidence of a Cantonese observer, who has described the situation in a recent contribution to the *North China Herald* (October 2, 1920). The story which he tells, an Oriental version of the tale of the Kilkenny Cats, might be told with equal force of many other provinces, for at present there are five uncrowned kings fighting for the mastery in China. But the Cantonese leaders of Young China, the highly vocal Americanised section which has produced men like Tang Shao-yi, Sun Yat-sen, Wen Tsung-yao, and Wellington Koo, insist so eloquently upon the glorious future which awaits their country (under their guidance) when a lawfully-elected Parliament gets to work under the right kind of Constitution, that the present condition of the people in Kuangtung and Kuangsi is particularly deserving of attention. For at Canton the Republicans and the Reformers, the Parliamentarians and Constitution-makers, have had practically a free hand since Yuan expelled them and the Kuo-Min tang from Peking. When Canton became a law unto herself, those staunch Republicans, Wu Ting-fang, Sun Yat-sen, and Tang Shao-yi, had a chance of proving to a sympathetic world that, here at least, it

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was possible for the Chinese to organise a system of representative government based on honest administration. Theirs was the opportunity, while all the world was at war, of proving, by practical performance, that capacity for efficient self-government which they had so often asserted on the platform and in the Press; this was the time to justify their demand for the abolition of extra-territoriality, by an object-lesson of wise and honest administration. What the actual results of their leadership have been, may be told in the words of the Cantonese writer:

"To put the whole subject in a nutshell, the Kuangtung troops under General Chen, who, by the way, is himself a Cantonese, are trying their utmost to evict the Kuangsi-ites. General Chen—like General Tan Yen-kai, the Hunan General who was successful in driving out the bandit chief, Chang Chin-yao, from Hunan, and thus secured the freedom of his province—is trying to free his fellow-provincials from despotism, and thus make way for self-government and liberty.

"Kuangtung, which has always been reputed to be the most progressive and most prosperous province in China, is alleged to have been reduced to poverty and to a state of debt amounting to not less than $50,000,000, simply because of the misrule, the avarice, the corruption, and the incompetency of the Kuangsi party in Kuangtung, in spite of the fact that they have bled the province of every cash by all kinds of illegal methods.

"Since their entry into Kuangtung under the cloak of 'defenders of the Constitution,' the Kuangsi militarists, numbering more than 50,000 troops, are said to have imposed illegal taxes, licensed disorderly and gambling houses, forced the planting of poppy, allowed the smuggling of opium and the selling and smoking of the drug, permitted the smuggling of arms by robber bands, and so forth. Well-tried officials have been removed from office, and where one competent man was enough in former days, fifty incompetent men are used nowadays —all hangers-on of the Kuangsi party. And, moreover, the salary of one official in former days is multiplied not less than thirty times under the rule of Kuangsi. Archives

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precious to the hearts of the Cantonese are said to have been stolen. The machinery from the Arsenal and the Mint has been removed. The funds of the Treasury are missing. Books of the public libraries have been taken away and the shelves are left bare. All has been taken away. Where?—To Kuangsi.

"Progressive enterprises have been interfered with. Government schools have not received their annual appropriations, and many were thus forced to close. Civil affairs, which were left in the hands of a few military men, were forced to go begging, while military expenditure —not to mention troops—has increased by leaps and bounds. Newspapers were closed simply because they voiced public opinion. Editors were taken out and summarily shot without being accorded a hearing and without being allowed to defend themselves or to secure the services of legal counsel to defend them—and there are supposed to be law courts in the province. The district of Kinchow was cut off from Kuangtung and annexed to Kuangsi in spite of the protests of the Cantonese.

"All of these misdeeds have occurred since the break-up of the Military Government. General Tsen Chun-hsüan, who was the only member of the Military Government left in Canton, joined with Lu Yung-ting against the Cantonese people, who have always followed the leadership of Dr. Sun Yat-sen. In order that he might gain the sympathy of the Cantonese, he enlisted the services of Mr. Wen Tsung-yao, a Cantonese official in the north, and a man full of promise, and Dr. Chen Chin-tao, former Minister of Finance, to aid him. Wen and Chen were only tools, however, in the hands of the militarists, who remained as arrogant as ever.

"The problem of the Cantonese, therefore, was to drive out of their province Generals Tsen and Mu Yung-hsien, the latter being the Kuangsi Tuchun of Kuangtung, as well as Wen and Chen, and to rid the province of the Kuangsi bandit-troops. Once this was done, Kuangsi influence in the province would have been broken.

"The next problem of the Cantonese, after regaining their province, is to defeat the Kuangsi-ites in their own province and drive out Lu Yung-ting, the bandit Inspector-General who is responsible for all the trouble. Unless this man is driven from power, they will constantly be in danger of his recovering strength and attacking them

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once more. With this bandit in power there can be no peace in China, say the Cantonese. He will ever remain a thorn in their side.

"It might be mentioned that although neither 'side' has a dollar, some of the individual Kuangsi-ites have amassed fortunes amounting to millions of dollars. Lu Yung-ting is said to have some $30,000,000 buried in the earth in his village near Nanning, Kuangsi. In his peace proposals he has openly stated that he is willing to make any kind of peace provided he be allowed to keep these ill-gotten gains."

Now, the men who are chiefly responsible for this state of affairs (which, in greater or less degree, now prevails throughout China) are the professional politicians who came to the front at the time of the revolution—the men whose message, proclaimed to the ends of the earth, declared that, when once the Republic was established, a new era of peace and progress would dawn and China take her rightful place among the great nations. It is important to remember this, because to-day a new generation of Young China is coming to the front, professing the same lofty aims and patriotic fervour as those which distinguished the utterances of Sun Yat-sen and his revolutionary colleagues, and once more we are asked to believe that, if only their hands can be strengthened and their plans fulfilled, all will be well with China. "Let only the Dragon Throne be abolished," said Young China in 1911, "and we will show you how the country should be governed." To-day the *dramatis personæ* have changed, but the play is ever the same. "Let only the Militarist Government be abolished," says Young China; "only give us a chance to show what government should be, and all will be well." But to look for salvation from this quarter, to believe in a Chinese world suddenly made free for democracy, one must find justification for the belief that the Western-learning student of to-day is likely to bring to the conduct of public affairs a mind and methods different from those of his

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immediate predecessors. What grounds are there for any such belief?

As a matter of fact, Young China, being highly intelligent, knows very well that the root of the trouble in China is in no sense militarism; the catchword has been adopted from Europe by the politicians in order to invest a very sordid struggle with some semblance of moral purpose. Men of the class of C. T. Wang and Wellington Koo are perfectly well aware of the fact that such Government as exists in China to-day is conducted not on militarist, but on purely mercenary principles. They know that the "Constitutional" battle-cry of the "Outs" is the emptiest make-believe, and that there has never been any real difference of political principles at issue between the warring factions, north or south, east or west. They know that those who administer the Government at Peking and in the provinces are merely groups of predatory officials, true to type in the matter of "squeeze," but far more rapacious than of old, because of the absence of the restraining authority of the Throne.

Let us face the simple truth, which Young China's record of the past eight years has repeatedly emphasised, namely, that one thing, and one thing only, prevents the establishment of a stable Central Government at Peking, and this is the insatiable greed of money which possesses every Chinese who attains to public office. Take, for example, the record of the so-called Republican leaders who came to the front in 1911. Those who rose to high office as Tuchuns, speedily proved that a mandarin by any other name is still a mandarin. Almost without exception they proceeded to amass great fortunes at all costs and all speed. In the words of the *North China Daily News* (always a well-disposed observer), "Chinese officialdom under the so-called democracy has become more irresponsible and more flagrantly venal than ever before. Its special activities have been directed to the business of recruiting private forces with

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public money and of selling the power thus acquired to the highest bidder." Thus in China, as in Russia and Mexico, we see once more the truth demonstrated that the type of a social structure can never be changed by a political revolution. As Spencer says, "Out of the nominally free government set up, a new despotism arises, differing only from the old by having a new shibboleth and new men to utter it, but identical with the old in the determination to put down opposition and in the means used to this end."

Young China to-day, as in 1911, loudly proclaims its patriotic integrity of purpose and capacity for honest work in the public service; but the fact remains (and the Chinese themselves admit it) that it is not possible to name a dozen men in all the ranks of the bureaucracy, old or new, whose record would command implicit confidence in the matter of disinterested, clean-handed administration. It is because of the lack of such men, and the impossibility of reorganising a stable Government without them, that the great majority of patriotic, non-official Chinese have come to the conclusion that the country's best chance of regaining stability and security lies in placing the national finances, as a whole, under some form of foreign supervision. And the machinery for this supervision is already in existence; all that is required is gradually to extend the system of administration which has proved so beneficial as applied to the Maritime Customs, the Salt Gabelle, and the Postal Service.

During my recent visit to China, I discussed this question with officials of all classes, with those in office and those in comfortable retirement, with leading representatives of the serious-minded section of Young China, with merchants, bankers, and scholars; and everywhere, from the immediate vicinity of the Presidential mansion at Peking to the guilds and compradores of the Treaty Ports, I found a very general recognition of the truth that, left to itself, the country does not possess sufficient

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elements of constructive statesmanship to put an end to the chaos and corruption now prevailing. Amongst the highest officials at the capital and in the provinces, many were prepared to admit, in private conversation, that in foreign intervention lies China's only hope of putting an end to the pernicious activities of the political adventurers and freebooters who have made of civil war a lucrative industry. The list which I could make of the men who have confessed to this belief would be interesting and instructive. It cannot be published, however, for, since the students at Peking expressed their dissatisfaction with the Versailles Treaty last May by burning the house of Tsao Ju-lin and insisting on his dismissal from the Cabinet, officialdom goes in deadly fear of openly opposing their political opinions. One of the most marked characteristics of the Chinese is their extraordinary readiness to submit to intimidation by their own countrymen. It is a characteristic which, in the case of Peking's officials, has been intensified by the elimination of the Throne as a rallying-point for authority, and also by their natural anxiety, as rich men, to incur no avoidable risks, in a world full of perils of change. Let but the *yamêns* be disturbed by whisperings of some new plot, such as General Chang Hsün's escapade of 1917, and straightway long lines of carts, laden with the portable wealth of the mandarins, make their way from the houses of the great to the refuge of the banks and battlements of the Legation quarter. In the natural timidity of the officials and merchants lies the real secret of much of the extraordinary influence of the student class in China to-day. And the student knows it.

The increasing authority of the student class as a factor in the politics of the Republic is a phenomenon in itself as significant as the unparalleled wealth accumulated by the official class during the past eight years, while Europe and Japan have been besieged for loans by the Government drifting ever nearer and nearer to

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bankruptcy. Both are symptomatic of the demoralisation which became inevitable when, with the central authority, Young China cast off the ethical restraints and moral discipline of the Confucian régime; when, as the result of "Western learning" on the younger generation, parental authority—the very bed-rock of Chinese civilisation—lost something of its time-honoured sanctity in the eyes of the young men who claimed to lead public opinion.

Even before the Revolution, the overweening conceit, the undisciplined and nervous excitability, of the foreign-educated student had led many competent observers to wonder whether the wine of the new learning, so freely dispensed and rapidly imbibed, would prove to be a healthy stimulant or a dangerous intoxicant, whether the younger generation would have patriotism and patience enough to build up on the old foundations a new system of government acceptable and intelligible to the masses of their countrymen. After the passing of the Manchus and the inauguration of parliamentary procedure at Peking, it soon became apparent, to all who were not perversely blinded to the truth, that Young China had changed its old lamps for new, but that neither the wick of wisdom nor the oil of honesty was forthcoming. The whole record of the parliamentarians and professional politicians of the new dispensation during the past eight years has been a welter of sordid conspiracies, of corruption and party factions, unredeemed by any genuine manifestation of constructive statesmanship or self-denying patriotism. Western learning has, of course, produced a small number of men, both in the last generation and in the present, who combine great intellectual gifts with high moral qualities, but the fact remains that it is not possible for these men, if they become officials, either to exact or to practise strict honesty in public life. Nor is it possible for them to impart to the politically unconscious masses about them the inspiration of democratic institutions, the

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communal culture of our European civilisation. What was true of men like Wu Ting-fang and Tang Shao-yo in 1911, is true of C. T. Wang, S. G. Cheng, and Wellington Koo to-day.

The Young China of to-day, and especially the irreconcilable faction of the so-called Southern Government, professes its fervent belief in the regenerative virtue of democratic institutions, and particularly of parliaments and constitutions, just as it did in the days when Sun Yat-sen clamoured for the abolition of the Manchus. And to-day, as then, its views derive much of their importance abroad and influence in China from the fact that the section of European and American opinion which is identified with, and chiefly responsible for, this belief, continues to encourage it. Most missionary societies continue to assure Young China Militant that Liberalism abroad sympathises with its theories and sanctions its practices. Many missionaries, it is true, are beginning to express grave doubts as to the future. Even the blindest of honest enthusiasts can hardly shut his eyes to the mass of tares and wild oats that have sprung up in the field so carefully sown. The pious aspirations of platform patriotism can hardly outweigh such things as the officially organised traffic in native-grown opium, or the unblushing venality and profligacy of the parliamentary delegates at Peking and Canton, which has become a byword among the Chinese themselves.

Nevertheless, there are, as I have said, those who not only advocate encouragement of the student movement, but who profess to see in its emotional and undisciplined activities the long-deferred awakening of the Chinese people to the dawn of democracy. They forget that the foreign-educated Chinese student has indulged in these same emotional qualities, this passion for fierce rhetoric, flag-waving, and solemn processions, for at least a quarter of a century. They overlook, moreover, the deeply significant fact that whereas Young China will work

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itself to a semi-hysterical condition of eloquence and tears over China's sovereign rights in the Shantung case, its indignation has never yet been publicly directed against the growing rapacity of the metropolitan and provincial officials or the notorious corruption of both parliaments. Those who profess belief in the possibility of China's regeneration at the hands of the present generation of students, are, no doubt, in certain cases, sincere. Amongst missionaries there are many enthusiasts whose opinion is entitled to respect because of that sincerity; but those who have studied the student movement closely, know that most of its political activities are instigated and guided by the professional politician. The raw youths and schoolgirls who periodically parade the streets of Shanghai, Tientsin, and Peking, demanding the execution of the Chiefs of Police or denouncing negotiations with Japan, may convey to the uninitiated observer a new and vivid impression of patriotic national consciousness, but those behind the scenes are well aware that all this fervour and ferment of turbulent youth is often skilfully stimulated by the opponents of the official clique in power at Peking for their own sordid ends. In the case of the student outbreak last winter at Tientsin, for instance, there is no doubt (I have seen documentary evidence of the fact) that the anti-Japanese processions and demonstrations were deliberately organised by paid agents, with a view to embarrassing, and, if possible, overthrowing, the Cabinet at Peking. The actual funds employed (some $200,000) were traced to the estate of the late President, General Feng Kuo-chang, who died in possession of a vast fortune and a deep, unsatisfied grudge against his Prime Minister, Tuan Chi-jui. In the present state of Chinese politics, the fact that Tuan and his adherents were maintained in power (at a price) by Japan, was quite enough to account for much of the fervour displayed by the Government's opponents on the subject of Shantung. Incidentally, it may be observed that the

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Shantung agitation has not been in any true sense a national, or even a provincial, movement. This, I think, is sufficiently proved by the fact that, in Manchuria, the Chinese—practically all Shantung men—have never organised any boycott or other manifestation of hostility towards the Japanese.

To every impartial observer the truth is apparent that neither the Shantung question, nor the far wider problem of Japanese political ascendancy at Peking, can ever be satisfactorily settled until the warring factions of the "Ins" and "Outs" cease from their sordid strife and unite in supporting a Central Government, be it what it may. And it is because nothing in the present attitude of these factions justifies any hope of such a solution in the near future, that all those who realise the dangers of the situation also realise the necessity for measures of foreign financial control. In China's own interest the friendly Powers will have to insist upon measures by which the authority of the Central Government may gradually be re-established. In no other way can the world's most venerable civilisation be brought safely through its present perils to self-reliant independence and prosperity.

As matters stand in China to-day, it is more conspicuously evident than it was in 1911, that the ascendancy of Young China offers no hope of establishing a strong Central Government based on principles intelligible to the masses, and that, until such a Government is established, the present chaos of corruption and civil strife will continue. Eight years ago, when I lectured on the subject of China in the United States, most people were inclined to regard opinions of this kind as uninspired pessimism. The Press and public were generally content to form their opinion of China and the Chinese on the polished platitudes of men like Wu Ting-fang and Tang Shao-yi, diplomats in whom the Oriental faculty for tactful blandishment has been rendered more than usually effective by their foreign University education.

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The enthusiastic, intelligent, and apparently adaptable young men who came flocking from China to American colleges in ever-increasing numbers after 1900, seemed to justify bright hopes for the future, especially as they all expressed profound admiration for American institutions and ideals of government. But China's experience of the past eight years must have convinced every impartial observer—it has certainly convinced the Chinese themselves—that as it was under the Manchus so it is under the Republic: money remains the be-all and end-all of politics. It still remains emphatically, true, that ninety per cent. of the masses, in whose name Young China professes to speak, are illiterate; equally true, that they care nothing whether their rulers call themselves Emperors or Presidents, so long as they rule in accordance with the nation's time-honoured traditions. It is also true to-day, as it was under the Manchus, that, with the exception of the small Western-learning class, the educated minority of the population, following the Confucian teaching, remains profoundly indifferent to politics. Patriotic they are, no doubt, in the sense that they love their birthplace with a deep-rooted attachment, cherish a deep pride of race, and can be aroused to swift manifestations of hatred against the foreigner, when convinced that either their native soil or their immemorial customs are endangered by the alien invader. But Chinese patriotism, beyond the small circle of the professional politician, finds no expression in manifestations of public spirit or nationalistic feeling. It is safe to say that the agricultural masses of the population are far more concerned to-day with the illegal levies and taxes exacted from them by their self-appointed Republican rulers, than with the Shantung question or any of the alleged political differences between North and South. All they ask, these patient, toiling millions, is a Government that shall so order things that a man may enjoy the fruits of his labour in peace; a Government whose necessities and rapacities shall not exceed the limits



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prescribed by centuries of established custom. They were told, when the Son of Heaven passed into obscurity, that a Republic meant peace and prosperity, less work and less taxes; they have learned, during eight years of sack and pillage, that, Manchus or no Manchus, life and property were safer under the Dragon flag than they are to-day. They have learned that the new type of mandarin, in his strange, foreign clothes, has nothing to learn from the old (unless it be restraint) in the arts and crafts of "squeeze." And the scorpions of the new dispensation are harder to bear than the whips of the old, because every Yamên has become a law unto itself, against which there is no appeal.

There are those who, while admitting these truths, still pin their faith to the rising generation of Young China, to the student class which has not yet attained public office, but perceives that the shortest road thereto lies through the platform and the Press. To these, I would merely observe that China's situation is too critical to permit of further experiments just at present; also that, even if a few sincerely honest officials were forthcoming, they could do nothing to stem the tide of wholesale "squeeze" now running. I would go further, however, and assert that the instinct which impels the Chinese to put money in his purse whenever and however he can, is no more capable of being eradicated in one or two generations than the colour of his skin. It is an instinct, deep-rooted in the structural character of the race, a direct product of a struggle for existence far more severe (because rigorously localised for centuries) than anything in the history of European nations. And nothing can possibly mitigate the fierceness of this struggle, no political institutions can ever modify the qualities and defects which it produces, so long as the social system of the Chinese continues to make philo-progenitiveness a religious duty. Ancestor-worship, combined with the polygamous, patriarchal family system, have produced a state of society in which

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

UNMARRIED GIRLS OF THE MIDDLE CLASS (SHANGHAI), SUMMER COSTUME.

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every man will, if he can, raise himself and his immediate posterity above the level of the masses, for ever struggling for the bare necessities of existence. Turn to the pages of the Old Testament, and observe how the instinct for acquiring wealth is recognised and sanctioned as a dominant characteristic of the Oriental mind. To-day in China, as it was in the days of Solomon, "the rich man's wealth is his strong city," and "money answereth all things." It is true to-day, as it was in the days of Babylon, that "a man's gift maketh room for him and bringeth him before great men." By no process of exhortation can the mandarin's incorrigible greed of gain be eradicated; its motive force lies deep in the unrecorded ages of the past. Looking at things in this light, we may understand why the bribery and corruption of the official class in China arouse no more indignation under the Republic than they did under the Manchus. And finally, one has only to realise how irresistible a temptation besets the mandarin, whether old or new, in the big-scale proposals of foreign financiers and concession-seekers, to perceive the root cause of China's financial chaos and the imperative need of thorough reorganisation under reliable foreign supervision.

If I thus insist upon the financial aspect of the situation and the urgent need, before all else, of compulsory honesty in the public service, it is because of the tendency now prevalent in certain quarters to put the cart before the horse. No possible good can result from discussing the quarrel between the so-called Northern and Southern factions, the pooling of "spheres of influence," the unification of railway control, the reform of the currency, or any other question, so long as all the energies of the official class are centred in a struggle for possession of the public purse, to be refilled, whenever emptied, by reckless borrowing. It is obviously useless to attempt to protect the nation's sovereign rights so long as its Government is prepared to barter them for cash.

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Looking back over the history of China as it has developed during the last century, it seems impossible to deny that most of the nation's present disabilities and dangers are due to no fault of its own, but to the sudden creation by the Western Powers of a new condition of things to which the world's oldest civilisation was unable to adapt itself. Left to itself, that civilisation would undoubtedly have been sufficient to overcome such internal disorders as the Taiping Rebellion or the downfall of the Manchu dynasty; but the economic pressure of modern Europe, its earth-hunger, cosmopolitan finance, and man-killing devices, forbade all hope of China's being permitted to maintain her ancient isolation. The material civilisation of the West asserted its superiority over that of the East by forcible means, with which all the wisdom of the East was unable to cope. If we admit this—as I think we must—then, if there be anything vital in the ideals which the Anglo-Saxon race professes, anything attainable in the League of Nations ideal of "a reign of law, sustained by the organised opinion of mankind," the West owes the East a deep debt of reparation. And it can only be discharged by sympathetic understanding of the Chinese people's real needs, and an earnest, self-denying determination to protect their helplessness through the necessary period of administrative reconstruction.

And never has there been a race more worthily deserving of protection at the hands of humanity. For, say what you will, that very passive philosophy which exposes China to the rapacity of earth-hungry Powers, approaches more nearly to the essential principles of Christianity, as laid down in the Sermon on the Mount, than the every-day practice of most Christian nations. Here you have a people in very truth "too proud to fight," because they not only profess, but firmly believe, that, in the long run, reason and justice must triumph over force. The polished pacifism of Confucius and the intellectual superiority of his offspring, the classical *literati*, both

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tempered with the Buddhist doctrine of gentleness and compassion, have produced a type of civilisation, a race-mind, fixed in unity of ideas, which to the Chinese themselves (and to many Europeans) seem morally superior to that of the West—a splendid inheritance.

As a French writer[1] has recently expressed it, "The civilisation of China has stood its tests. It has provided countless generations of men with food, not only for the body, but the soul. It has been a school of moral beauty and virtue, of gentleness and wisdom. It has given to China a degree of happiness, and to the life of her people a stability and harmony, which have never been excelled (the Chinese would say never equalled) by any other civilisation."

Given goodwill and a sincere desire on the part of the Powers to help the Chinese people to preserve this inheritance, there should be no insuperable difficulty in restoring law and order, peace and prosperity throughout the country. But the goodwill must be there, genuinely active, and based upon an earnest desire to co-operate in a common cause, upon principles of right and justice.

Is this a counsel of perfection? I think not. At all events, the problem is simpler than many of those which the League of Nations proposes to solve in Europe—for instance, that of Poland. In the first place, it is obviously to the interest of the commercial Powers concerned, and especially of Japan, to put an end to the present chaotic state of affairs in China. It is equally evident that no one Power can hope to tackle the business single-handed. Intelligent self-interest points, therefore, on this occasion, in the same direction as that prescribed by philanthropy. There is still, no doubt, a very influential body of opinion behind the Military Party in Japan which holds to the ideal of fishing in troubled waters, but, for reasons which will be stated hereafter,

[1] Émile Hovelaque, *La Chine*, 1920.

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I believe that even the Military Party is rapidly coming to the conclusion that a selfishly aggressive policy towards China is not likely to be profitable. Herein lies one of the most hopeful features of the situation.

For observe, that while the dangers and difficulties which immediately threaten China are one and all the result of financial mal-administration, the actual wealth and resources of the country are such that an effective Central Government might easily become prosperously solvent within a comparatively short time, certainly within ten years. There is no reason whatever why the Chinese Government should remain impecunious, if only normal fiscal relations can be re-established between Peking and the provinces, and the country's debts tabulated and reorganised under expert and honest supervision. So long as the present senseless warfare of political factions continues, the Central Government's revenue-collecting energies must remain paralysed. The first thing needful is to place it in such a position of authority as shall enable it to gather into the national Treasury the land tax, salt dues, and other revenues which are at present collected and annexed by those predatory barons, the provincial Governors. For the last three years at least, Peking has been literally existing from hand to mouth, borrowing from Peter to pay Paul, and pawning the country's last realisable assets in the process.

The financial situation with which we have now to deal in China is in some respects more encouraging than it was just before the outbreak of war in Europe. Apart from the fact that co-operation under an international reorganisation scheme would now seem to have become possible—which it never was before the war—the Chinese Government's revenues have been greatly increased for debt-paying purposes owing to the increase in the Customs duties and the rise in the value of silver.[1] Then there is the probability that the Powers concerned may agree, as

[1] This was written before the price of silver collapsed, seriously increasing the difficulties of China's national finances.

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part of a reconstruction scheme, to reduce, or completely remit, China's obligations under the Boxer indemnities. Finally, there is the great and increasing national revenue produced by the reorganisation of the Salt Gabelle. But all the wealth of Golconda will never balance the Chinese budget—indeed, there can never be a budget to balance—until every dollar of income and expenditure is vouched for and audited by responsible expert accountants. The record of the Imperial Maritime Customs, and that of the railways of North China, prove that a thoroughly effective system of auditing can be carried out without offending the susceptibilities of the Chinese authorities and with indisputable benefit to the national exchequer. On the other hand, the history of every railway, bank, or industrial enterprise under mandarin control has been financially disastrous, for all but the officials concerned.

Under the scheme which originated at Washington in 1918, steps have been taken to establish an International Board for the abolition of all railway spheres of influence and for merging all railway concessions into a national Chinese system, wherein the principle of effective financial control would be observed. The scheme, like the intentions of the financial Consortium, is excellent in itself, and, given a stable and solvent Government at Peking, it should be feasible, together with many other necessary reforms. But no good can possibly come of discussing any of these schemes until the problem of consolidating the Central Government has been successfully solved. If China is to escape disruption, if her people are to be enabled to pursue their normal ways of productive industry, the provincial Governors (Tuchuns) must cease from being each a law unto himself. This will only happen when their rabble armies have been disarmed and disbanded under such conditions as will ensure their final disappearance from the scene; that is to say, under the watchful, expert eyes of foreigners representing the Consortium, which must finance the disbandment

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operations. This at first may seem an impossible solution, but, as a matter of fact, many competent observers, Chinese and European, consider that the scheme is practicable, and that the time has come to attempt its execution. In any case it offers the only alternative to anarchy. For, as matters stand, civil war in China has become a lucrative profession.

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## CHAPTER V

### CIVIL WAR AS A PROFESSION

UNTIL the end of 1919, as the result of Young China's activities in the Press and of propaganda work done by one or two foreign journalists in Chinese pay, a very general impression existed abroad that the southern provinces and the North were seriously at war. Furthermore, that the South was fighting for the Constitution and for the rightful powers of Parliament against the northern reactionaries or militarists; and that the struggle would be waged to the bitter end, by fervent patriots, in the sacred name of liberty on the one side, and for the vindication of lawful authority on the other. Finally, that the South had established an independent Republican Government of its own at Canton, and that a conference of northern and southern delegates was engaged in discussing possible terms of peace in that safe and very hospitable neutral ground, the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai.

From the utterances of the American and the British Press concerning this protracted but strangely silent struggle, it was evident that either its own preoccupations or the vagueness of the news from China prevented the outside world from coming to any satisfactory conclusion concerning either the merits of the combatants or the real cause of their strife. The picture of the South nobly struggling to be free, fighting against heavy odds for the liberties of the people, naturally aroused a good deal of sympathy at the outset; but the picture itself was so confused, and in some respects so obviously intended to beguile, that sympathy was generally tem-



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pered with wait-and-see discretion. The emergence as Republican leaders of men like the ex-Minister Wu Ting-Fang, the ex-Viceroy Tsen, or ex-Governor Tang Shao-yi, was certainly sufficient to justify any amount of scepticism about the fervour of the southern Republic's radicalism; for had not all of them contentedly held high office under the Manchus? And then the swift series of events which followed upon President Yuan Shih-k'ai's attempt to seize the Throne, and his sudden death in June 1916; the Manchu Emperor's seven-day emergence, and the subsequent dismissals of Presidents and Premiers, amidst tumult and shouting of Tuchuns—all these things contributed to make impartial observers doubt that the Chinese world had been made safe for Republicanism.

Since then, the picture of a war being waged in defence of political principles has faded gently into the limbo of things that are easily forgotten, and the world at large has gradually learned something of the real state of affairs. North and South, not to mention East and West, are still at war, in the sense that five super-Tuchuns and seventeen lesser satraps maintain armed forces in the field, and even more on paper. But these forces are not seriously engaged in any systematic warfare for the assertion of clearly-defined political principles. The only real warfare now waged is the same old struggle for place and patronage and pelf which has gone on, grim and silent, for centuries around and about the seats of the mighty in Peking. Moreover, there is no longer any serious pretence of vital difference between North and South. The Peace Conference at Shanghai continues to differ in perfect accord, partly because the delegates find in the Foreign Settlement a very pleasant and profitable gathering-place, but chiefly because both factions are agreed that the foreigner must somehow be impressed with the seriousness of the strife. Should he cease to provide further loans, either for the disbandment of troops or for administrative expenses, the bottom would fall out of a very safe and lucrative profession.

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*R. T. Prideaux]*

SUNSET ON THE HWEI RIVER, CHEKIANG.

"Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds."

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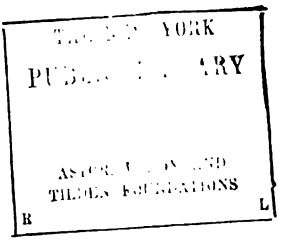


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For this is what civil war has actually come to, in the supple hands of the modern mandarin. To show that the whole business is a stupendous farce, what better proof can be given than the fact that, in recent foreign loan negotiations, the Peking militarists have expressed their willingness to allow the "rebel" Cantonese to have a "slice of the melon," and that the financiers of the Consortium consent to do business, in the name of unity, with the house thus divided? Where, outside of China, or Gilbert and Sullivan, would it be possible for alleged fierce belligerents to arrange a businesslike division of Customs revenues, so as not to disturb the security of the foreign bond-holder? Young China is in the habit of denouncing the governing clique at Peking and the provincial Tuchuns who support it as "militarists," and the Press abroad, which gets most of its ideas from and through Young China, has been misled by the misuse of this badly overworked word. Needless to say that in China there is no such thing as militarism, in the true sense of the term. The two-and-twenty Tuchuns who, with the aid of their uniformed ex-bandits and coolies, hold sway each in his own province, are the direct descendants, true to type, of the mandarin Viceroys and Governors of former days.

When Young China denounces General this or Colonel that, and when the doings of these warriors are recorded in the native Press, the world at large naturally gets an impression of truculent fire-eaters, boot-and-saddle swash-bucklers of the picturesque Mexican type; but the real article is something very different—generally a sleek Confucianist scholar up to date, a slim and subtle intelligence, coldly calculating and quite ruthless, who uses men and money with consummate ability. In the new game of politics which developed after the passing of the Dragon Throne, it was the super-men of the educated class who made their way to the top (never to the front), ambitious spirits and quick brains, that saw the tide of fortune and seized it when it served. And the real

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question in China to-day is, how to limit the power and rapacity of these Tuchuns, how to bring under the authority of the Central Government those who, during the past six years, have had time not only to taste the sweets of independent power, but to perfect, each in his own province, the machinery of self-determination. Very self-determined fellows indeed are the Tuchuns.

When Young China declares that it wishes to get rid of the militarists, what it really means is that it would like to oust from power the men who, relying on their hordes of bandits, have been able to amass wealth under the Republic far greater than any Viceroy ever amassed under the Empire. The object of the Cantonese "constitutionalists" in 1919–1920 was, in the first place, to get rid of the northern "militarists," that is to say, of General Tuan Chi-jui and his Anfu Club henchmen. This they claimed to do on high moral grounds, because Tuan's power had undoubtedly been upheld and his purse filled by Japanese money, at a serious risk to China's sovereignty in more than one direction. After that, they aspired to get rid of the northern Tuchuns and to replace them, in the public interest, by their own nominees. The only weak point about this programme, from the public point of view, lay in the notorious fact that the men who since 1916 had claimed to govern the southern Republic, have proved themselves just as greatly lacking in public spirit and administrative honesty as their colleagues of the North, and that, in the matter of "squeezing," there is nothing whatsoever to choose between a southern and a northern Tuchun. One of the most earnest intellectuals of foreign-educated Young China, Mr. S. G. Cheng, whom I had the pleasure of meeting at Peking in February 1920, deals very frankly with this aspect of the situation in his recently published work, *Modern China*. One passage is so illuminating, coming from a southerner, that it is worth quoting in full:

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"For military operations against the North, the South depends on governors who are just as selfish as their northern colleagues. It also receives, as its allies, brigands or military leaders who have some personal grievance against the North and who desire to gratify their greed and ambition by taking advantage of the quarrel between the constitutionalists and the militarists. Among the army commanders of the South, many have no sympathy at all with the democratic aspirations of the constitutionalists, but fight their own battle under the cloak of a good cause. This hopeless state of affairs is acknowledged and deplored by the southern leader, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who summarises the situation by saying that the struggle of military leaders for supremacy is equally rampant in the South and in the North, and that he has almost exhausted his voice, with no effect, in calling attention to the incoherent situation."

A good deal of blood has flowed under the bridges since I ventured to suggest to Dr. Sun and his friends, in 1912, that nothing but anarchy could possibly result from their attempt to introduce ready-made republicanism in China. And much more blood will flow, unless the Powers intervene, before the inevitable Dictator emerges and compels the warring factions to cease from strife.

As a good Confucianist, Mr. Cheng believes in appealing to the patriotism of the Tuchuns, in persuading them "to surrender their own interests, so as to save the country from further bloodshed." But to appeal to the patriotism of the Tuchuns would be "going to the goat's house for wool." It is reckoned by competent observers that every one of them (with two or three exceptions) has amassed a large fortune, and many are known to be multi-millionaires. Some of them have invested vast sums in real estate at the Treaty Ports, whilst others have deposited their wealth in the foreign banks. Others, again, are looking about for safe investments in Anglo-Chinese companies, a fact which has a good deal to do with the recent development of the "co-operative enterprise" idea. It has been estimated that, during the past

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eight years, the twenty-two Tuchuns and the metropolitan officials between them have squeezed enough money to pay off four-fifths of China's National Debt; a good deal of this money has been "squeezed" from foreign loans and concession contracts. And all this time, while a handful of men have been growing fabulously rich, the Government, which they are supposed to serve, has been borrowing up to the very last limit of its credit. If there were any real patriotism amongst them, would they have continued to borrow abroad at ruinous rates of exchange? Would they not have lent to the State some of their own superfluous wealth? During the progress of the loan negotiations at Peking last year, it was common knowledge that many leading Chinese officials were ready and willing to subscribe a large amount of capital to the flotation of a chartered Anglo-Chinese company. But for internal national loans, to relieve the country's urgent needs, no money is forthcoming, for the simple reason that they are never repaid. And while millions of people are starving and selling their children in the famine districts, the Tuchuns do practically nothing to relieve their terrible burden of suffering.

An appeal to their patriotism is evidently useless, where money is concerned, but the very wealth of the present group of Tuchuns might well be made instrumental in relegating them and their rabble troops into private life, if they were once persuaded that the Powers were in earnest and that the provinces would have to reckon in future with a real, instead of a sham, Government at Peking. To the Western mind, the idea may sound fantastic; nevertheless, I heard many wise and experienced Chinese discuss the situation of their country at Peking and Shanghai last winter, and most of them were of opinion that the Tuchuns would be quite willing to have their troops disbanded for them by the obliging foreigner, so that they themselves might retire to dignified leisure in their well-feathered nests. As Tang Shao-yi

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put it, when I discussed men and affairs at his private house in Shanghai, "I think they would like to resign, so as to have time to attend to their investments. At all events," he said, "anything would be better than another revolution and a new lot of Tuchuns; for the new lot would be in a great hurry to get rich, while the present lot ought to be nearly satisfied." (Tang Shao-yi, ex-Minister under the Manchus, ex-Special Envoy to the United States, scholar, diplomat, genial host, and good sportsman, seems to have developed a misanthropic vein since he forsook Yuan Shih-k'ai in 1912 and became a leader of the Cantonese secessionists. When I saw him he had retired, like Achilles, to his tent, and was taking no part in the Peace Conference, although still supposed to be chief spokesman for the South.)

But to return to the Tuchuns, whose predatory habits and methods of "self-determination" constitute the immediate problem in China. The ease and impunity with which they have plundered, and are still plundering, the country, their cynical pretences of civil war, their endless plots and jealous intrigues, all have served to convince the large respectable majority of Chinese (who meddle not in politics) that a strong Central Government is the only possible corrective of chaos. The merchant class, in particular, fully realises that there is at present no Government in China, but only warring groups of self-seeking politicians, and that this fact alone accounts for the wickedness and the wealth of the Tuchuns. Under the Manchus, if the wealth of a Viceroy or a Governor was known to exceed the limits prescribed by dignity and decency, the offender was invited, with punctilious courtesy, to present himself for an audience at Peking, and there, with the utmost delicacy, a certain proportion of his wealth was taken from him and found its way back into circulation. Even the most powerful Viceroys could never resist these polite invitations, because loyalty to the Throne was a vital thing, a rallying-point and a restraining force throughout the entire mandarin

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hierarchy. That restraining force having disappeared, it was obviously a case of "to your tents, O Israel." The Tuchun of to-day has become a law unto himself, and there is none that can bring him to account.

It is worth remembering that, as I have shown, had it not been for the intervention of Japan, Yuan Shih-k'ai would assuredly have restored the Throne in 1916, and with it the authority of the Central Government. After Yuan's death, the mantle of his power, which fell upon the shoulders of Tuan Ch'i-jui, was very ragged at the edges. Tuan's reason for forsaking his old chief and declining to support his claims to the Throne lay chiefly in the fact that he himself had designs on the Presidency of the Republic; therefore he denounced Yuan's policy as that of an autocrat and no true Republican. But no sooner had he become Prime Minister than he proceeded to follow Yuan's example, by appointing his own henchmen to vacancies in the provincial governorships and then proceeding to suppress all opposition by force. His policy, as defined by himself, lacked the terse vigour of Yuan's style, but it was quite definite enough to eliminate any earnest patriot's hopes of unity and concord.

"I hope," he declared, "to unite and pacify the country by the aid of my northern colleagues. The policy of attacking the South and the South-west is only adopted because the Government in recent years has exhausted its wisdom and ability in meeting parliamentary tumults and has become sick of party compromise. Looking around the country, I find that only the real military force of the North can save the country and enforce the law."

This was four years ago. Since then, Tuan has learned, even as Yuan learned before him, that, failing the authority of the Son of Heaven, only masterful autocracy, well provided with funds, can ever hope to secure the loyalty of ambitious provincial officials. In the previous chapter, the story of those five years was roughly

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outlined; it is a tale so saturated with the treasons, stratagems, and spoils of rival politicians, that no single individual's record can be associated with any definite principle or policy. When, in the end, Tuan found himself between the devil of a hostile Parliament and the deep sea of chronic insolvency, his supporters, the Northern Governors, would only continue to back him at a price. That price had to be paid partly in cash, for the maintenance of their real and alleged forces, and partly by recognition of their fiscal and political independence. Under these circumstances, it soon became evident to Tuan and his friends in power at Peking that they must either face the prospect of an early retirement into private life or find some means of raising the money necessary to retain the "loyalty" of the Northern Governors. Herein, to put the matter frankly, lay the secret of the well-established ascendancy of Japan in the councils of Tuan Chi-jui and the so-called Northern Party. Up to the summer of 1920, it was all a question of funds. Tuan and the Anfu Club have since been overthrown by a rival political faction, but the President and the Chihli party are now denounced by the South, on the very same grounds and with equal fervour. History repeats itself, in this matter, with monotonous regularity. Just as in 1900 Li Hung-chang sold a portion of his country's birthright for a savoury mess of Russian pottage, so Tuan Chi-jui, the Anfu Club, and its packed Parliament, maintained themselves in power with funds borrowed from Japan, at a price which will be found to be no light one when the accounts fall due for payment. And Tuan having fallen (with a full purse and no penalties), the two great satraps of the North, Chang Tso-lin and Tsao Kun, are now openly accused of being in Japanese pay.

And so, after eight years of that Republic which was to demonstrate the patriotism of the classes and the self-governing capacity of the masses, China has reached a condition of affairs which causes most of her people



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to sigh for the comparatively honest days of the old Empress Dowager. Neither of the so-called Governments of the North and the South makes any pretence of trying to govern; both are nothing more than groups of officials, each struggling at all costs to feather its own nest, before the bankruptcy of the country shall compel the inevitable intervention of the foreign Powers. Education, which was to have been the Republic's first care, is either completely neglected or left to the initiative of public-spirited scholars and local gentry. With the exception of the Customs, Post-office, and Salt revenues, collected under the supervision of foreigners, which form the security for China's foreign debts, the Central Government's revenues from the provinces are small and precarious. With regard to such internal matters as the administration of justice, the regulation of trade, opium-growing, and military equipment, each province goes its independent way, either asserting complete rights of autonomy or maintaining polite relations with the capital, as each Governor may think fit. The Northern provinces, whose Governors have usually supported the nominal authority of Peking, in return for subsidies in cash, have been occasionally and to some extent united against the southern Tuchuns, and may generally be relied upon to join forces to prevent the Cantonese (or any other) clique from ousting and replacing their own friends and nominees. But neither in the North nor in the South has there been at any time anything approaching to real cohesion in the ranks of the forces supposed to be at civil war. The only constant and conspicuous feature of the situation on both sides has lain in the incessant intrigues of one Tuchun against another. There is no solidarity in any group or party; secret emissaries from northern Tuchuns are constantly being sent on more or less treasonable missions to leaders in the south, and *vice-versa*. Men who should be working together are known to be secretly plotting against each other; it is a case of every man for himself, and the devil take the hindermost.

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During my stay in Shanghai, in January 1920, I spent several days in endeavouring to ascertain from the alleged leaders of the Northern and Southern delegates to the Peace Conference what real differences prevented them from uniting in a patriotic endeavour to rescue their country from its present deplorable condition. The results of this inquiry were purely negative; of a nature, in fact, to confirm one's conviction that none of these word-warriors wanted peace, for the simple reason that they all stood to profit individually by the continuance of strife, much in the same way that a considerable number of officials have always waxed fat on the devastating floods of the Yellow River and the distribution of famine relief.

First, I saw the Cantonese leader, Tang Shao-yi, whom in the old Manchu days I had known as Governor of Fengtien, and later as Director-General of Railways at Peking. But, as I have said, Tang had but then just withdrawn, in dudgeon, from the Conference, because of some personal objection to the leading Northern delegate, Wang I-Tang, and at the moment the Canton province was therefore unrepresented: in other words, the Conference was, officially speaking, at a standstill. Tang declined to discuss the idea of a Coalition Government representing both North and South, although he admitted that the leaders of the opposing factions had all contrived to work together, amicably enough, under the Manchus. But he waxed very eloquent in denouncing Tuan Chi-jui and the Northerners, who, he declared, were basely selling the country to the Japanese. Asked for a clear definition of the political principles at issue, he frankly confessed that it was no longer a question of differences between North and South, but the so-called Radicals were fighting for a principle when they denied the right of the President, under compulsion of the Tuchuns, to dissolve Parliament.

"If Peking were to recognise this principle," I inquired, "would the Cantonese party come to terms?"

"It is too late for that," he replied, "but, as a matter

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of fact, there is no real fighting at present. On the other hand, there will be no real peace until the people in power at Peking put an end to the Military Agreement with Japan, and to all the other secret agreements of the last five years. Every one of the 'eight demands' which the Southern delegates have put forward, and which Peking declines to discuss, arises, directly or indirectly, from the fact that the Government at Peking has become nothing more nor less than a dependency of Tokyo. Even the Shantung question is of trifling importance as compared to this fact."

There is no doubt that at this time the South—or, to describe more accurately the opponents of the Peking Government, the "Outs"—had a good rallying cry and a powerful appeal to all patriotic sentiments in the country when they demanded "the abolition of the Military Agreement with Japan, and of the War Participation Loan, together with the punishment of the Chinese who signed them." The significance of this secret treaty will be discussed in due course, when we come to consider the whole question of Japanese policy in China. But, looking at the matter from the Cantonese malcontents' point of view, there is no denying the force of the argument on which they based their demand for full publication of all the agreements that have been made from 1917 to 1920 between the Anfu Club clique at Peking and the Japanese Government or its agents. With regard to the Military Agreement in particular, they asserted that, instead of being, as it was announced, a convention intended to protect China's rights and sovereignty in her northern dependencies, threatened by the disorder in Siberia, it was, in fact, a surrender of Chinese sovereignty to Japanese agents, in return for money, equipment, and military advisers, all of which Tuan and his friends used solely to strengthen their own position against their political opponents. Tang Shao-yi emphasised the fact that, when the agreement was made in 1918, it was declared to be for common action by

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

A VILLAGE ON THE CHIENTANG RIVER.

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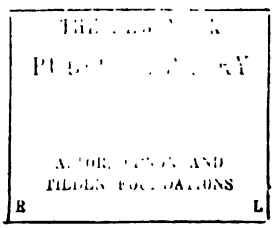


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China and Japan and for purposes of mutual defence against German and Bolshevik attack, and especially for the protection of the Eastern-Siberian railway. Furthermore, that it was to terminate automatically at the same time as Allied intervention in Siberia. On the face of it, when the Allies withdrew, the agreement should have lapsed. The full details of the agreement itself have never been disclosed, but Tang Shao-yi and his friends claimed to know that letters were exchanged at Peking on the 10th of February and the 1st of March, 1919, by virtue of which the agreement remains in force for an indefinite period. They declared that its conditions not only conferred upon Japan a rapidly-extending control over China's military forces in the North, but that they virtually reasserted all the "protectorate" conditions imposed by the famous "fifth group" of the twenty-one demands of May 1915. They pointed to the number and feverish activity of the Japanese military officers already attached to the Peking and Manchurian divisions, and professed to believe that, as part of the secret pact, Japan was regularly "contributing" 2,000,000 *yen* a month towards the reorganisation of China's Army—in other words, towards the replenishment of its leaders' purses.

Many of these details were possibly nothing more than intelligent surmise, and incapable of proof, but it remains unpleasantly true that when the "Outs" thus denounce the "Ins" for high treason, their accusations must remain irrefutable, so long as the party in power at Peking continues to depend on Japanese loans and subsidies for its very existence. If the Opposition, discarding all side issues, had ever been able to unite in one genuine effort of patriotism and to attack the ruling clique at Peking on this question alone, they would undoubtedly have commanded a wide measure of sympathy and support, not only in China, but from those Liberal elements in Japan which have frankly denounced the Military Agreement as an act of bad faith and bad

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policy. But nothing of this kind is to be expected from either of the present Parliaments or from any influential body of public opinion in China.

The proceedings of the Peace Conference at Shanghai made it abundantly clear that the "Outs" are not very much in earnest about anything, except getting in, or, failing that, getting a share of whatever loans and subsidies may be going.

There were ten Northern delegates at Shanghai in January 1920, who collectively might well have been described as "Joy-riders to the sea"; for at that time they had already spent five months very contentedly, on full pay, awaiting the pleasure of the South to renew the pleasant game of logomachy in the comfortable premises which were once the German club. To judge by all reports, Wang I-Tang, their chief delegate, had more trouble in dealing with his own followers than with the opposition; for each of these Northern delegates represented first an individual Tuchun, or party chieftain, and the North only as a bad second. One individual stood for the interests of Chang Tso-lin, the autocrat of Moukden; another represented Tsao Kun, the Tuchun of Chihli; a third held his brief for Little Hsü, warden of the Mongolian borders, and so on. Each and every one of these men was notoriously ready to intrigue with friend or foe, if by so doing he could increase his own patron's power and prestige at the expense of rival chieftains. If the Peace Conference has achieved nothing else, it has proved conclusively that there is neither solid North nor solid South, nothing, in fact, but a number of kaleidoscopic factions, each fighting for its own sordid ends.

I saw Wang I-Tang in a house of many mansions, surrounded by beautiful gardens, on the Bubbling Well road at Shanghai. Under the Manchus, Wang would probably have been a typical Taotai of the old classical model, full of pomp and ceremony and polite platitudes. As a modern Republican mandarin, he gave me the

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impression of an Oriental Count Fosco with bluntly democratic manners and the surface geniality of a *faux bonhomme;* but he had the coldly vigilant eye of a tortoise, beady and unblinking. The man whom the Anfu Club had selected to represent them could be no novice at the political game; but Wang's affable manner was intended to suggest the philosophical detachment of an orthodox mandarin. When, after discussing the situation and its perils, I inquired whether nothing could be done to secure unity of councils for the good of the State, he thought that it might be quite possible, in time. But for the moment, inasmuch as Kuangtung was unrepresented, he feared that the Conference could make no progress; at any rate he was not prepared to discuss the South's "eight demands." He thought that in two or three months Tang Shao-yi might perhaps be persuaded to "come out" again with new proposals; meanwhile we must have patience. To arrange everything satisfactorily would take a long time, probably five or ten years. He cordially agreed that Peking could not possibly carry on much longer without obtaining its regular revenues from the provinces, but no doubt the foreign Powers would continue to advance the necessary funds for some time to come. He declared that the payment of troops was becoming a matter of urgent and serious difficulty. Disbandment? That would mean bonuses and payment of arrears and the provision of employment for about 1,500,000 men, and even if the money were obtainable by loan, it would be very difficult to bring all the Tuchuns to one mind on the subject. When I suggested that a strong expression of public opinion, proclaimed through the delegates, might induce the Tuchuns to devote some of their own large savings to paying off their troops, he smiled what the Chinese call a "cold smile" and quickly changed the conversation. Was it true, he asked, that since the war America had become so rich, and England so poor, that the world's loan market will be in New York for the future?

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I began to understand why the Southern delegates object to Wang I-Tang on personal grounds.

A fortnight later, at Moukden, in Manchuria, I saw the great super-Tuchun, Chang Tso-lin, whose administrative ability, bold initiative, and shrewd business instincts had already spread the fame of his name all over China. Even before his emergence in the crisis of last summer, Chang held the three Manchurian provinces in the hollow of his hand; every Chinese official therein was his most obedient servant and rejoiced to do his bidding. Down south they will tell you that in bygone days Chang was a "hung hu tzŭ," that is to say, a bandit, and from the tales men tell of his Draconian methods and feverish activities, you imagine to yourself, before you meet him, a swashbuckler in a cocked hat surrounded by fierce retainers. As a matter of fact, like all the other Tuchuns, Chang does wear a cocked hat on occasions, to comply with the Republic's curious new ideas of dress and deportment; but when he receives the passing guest without ceremony, in his sumptuously furnished apartment of the Moukden *yamên*, the impression he gives you is that of a scholar, even a dilettante, with his slender figure, in its sober-coloured silk riding-jacket, and his careful speech, which is that of the literary elegant. Like most of the present-day governors of China, Chang is a young man for such a post, being now in his forty-eighth year; but as you talk with him, you get an inkling of the qualities that account for his extraordinarily rapid rise to power, the energy and courage of the man, the amazing swiftness and clearness of his brain. You realise that the qualities that bring a leader to the front in China, the things which appeal to the instinctive respect of the masses, are the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow, and that the chief secret of Chang's power is that (like the Empress Dowager, or Li Hung-chang) his methods conform instinctively to the workings of the Chinese race-mind. No one can call him over-scrupulous, but he knows to a nicety how far

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to go without undue risk in any direction; and in the matter of official trading, his countrymen—no bad judges—regard him as a positive genius.

As we talked of Japanese encroachments on China's sovereign rights, of the growing of opium, of the disbandment of troops, and other delicate topics, I understood why it is that the name of Chang Tso-lin inspired respect even unto the Peace Conference at Shanghai, and why his armed forces are on a different footing to those of most provincial satraps. At the end of January he had replied to the Presidential Mandate, which broached the question of a general disbandment, that no reduction of *his* troops was possible; on the contrary, that his forces would have to be increased, for the protection of the Chinese eastern railway and the Mongolian frontier. Many Chinese predict that when the bulk of the Southern Tuchuns' forces are disbanded—as they must be, sooner or later—Chang will be in a position to dictate his own terms to Peking, and that his will be the deciding hand in settling most of the political questions of the immediate future.

In the meanwhile, however, even a brief study of his masterful methods in Manchuria is sufficient to throw a good deal of light on the way the Tuchuns have amassed their fortunes. Chang combines the financial acumen of a Morgan with the business instincts of a Selfridge, and he leaves nothing to chance. He owns his own bank, his own farms, and with a finger in every commercial pie, makes his undisputed authority felt, like a live wire, throughout the three provinces. As banker and Tuchun combined, his method of dealing with the problems of local finance appears to be simple but drastic. When, in 1919, certain banks at Moukden engaged in a combine for manipulating exchange in a manner more profitable to themselves than to outsiders, it is reported that he called a meeting of all concerned and, speaking as Military Governor, genially intimated that any further attempt to corner exchange would involve the summary

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execution of the offenders. Tuchun bank stock has been a good market ever since. The bean trade, the rice trade, the money market, the operations of railway transport companies, one and all recognise and obey his supple master-hand, and minister to the wants of its Treasury. His emissaries are many and active, not only in Manchuria, but at Peking and even as far as the Yangtsze provinces; if report speaks truly, they take an active part in the speculative but very profitable opium traffic. When I spoke of this matter, Chang was sure, oh, quite sure, that no opium was grown anywhere within the limits of his jurisdiction; nevertheless, only that week the Anti-Opium Association at Peking had published a statement that the poppy was being freely cultivated in the Moukden district. And I myself can bear witness to the fact that a brisk trade in the drug was being carried on, in and through the city itself, by smugglers (chiefly Russian women), who bring it by the railway from Vladivostock and Harbin, and thence to Shanghai and beyond.

In Manchuria proper there are few, if any, bandits to-day. Chang's soldiers are regularly paid, and he himself organises their food supply. Law and order are maintained within the three provinces, and productive industry encouraged. Here, then, before our eyes, we have an object lesson which emphasises the simple fact that only a strong hand of effective authority is required to make China peaceful and prosperous. The same obvious truth has been demonstrated by Yen, Tuchun of Shansi, a wise and honest ruler. But, as matters stand, China as a whole is hopelessly misruled by the great majority of the twenty-two Tuchuns who have attained to arbitrary power in the provinces; the ruling clique at Peking are still in bondage to foreign paymasters; Parliament is utterly discredited, and education at a standstill. Only here and there, in a few of the Provincial Assemblies or amongst the educated local gentry, does one find a glimmer of patriotic and con-

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structive energy. The present self-elected rulers of China are utterly incapable of restoring order, and if the country is to have ten or fifteen years of peace, which it needs, foreign intervention will have to establish it.

The events of the past year, the recent clash of armed forces struggling for the mastery at Peking, and the present position of political affairs throughout China, afford conclusive proof—if proof be still needed—of the futility of hoping for the evolution of any well-ordered system of stable self-government from the existing chaos. Only a benevolent despotism can restore peace and prosperity, and unfortunately there is at the moment no super-mandarin in sight, "no man of mark," as Sir Robert Hart put it, "whom all China would accept." It would therefore seem that chaos must continue, with all its burden of unnecessary suffering for the wretched people, until, by process of exhaustion, the elements of strife shall disappear. Meanwhile, let us examine briefly the actual condition of affairs and ask ourselves dispassionately in what respect, and to what extent, has the welfare of the Chinese people been advanced by the revolution of 1911 and its consequences?

Last July, when various political groups united in wrath against the Anfu Club, and when, by force of arms, Tuan Chi-jui, Little Hsü, and other leaders of the so-called "Militarist" faction had been driven from power, it was hoped that the victorious General, Wu Pei-fu, with Chang Tso-lin to support him, would be able to carry through his plan of convening a Citizens' Convention, and thus put an end to the strife of rival Parliaments. Hopes were forcibly expressed by Young China's organs at Shanghai and in the South that the downfall of Tuan's party meant the end of Japanese ascendancy and a prospect of popular government in a united country. But what are the actual results of the struggle? No sooner had the Chihli party, headed by the President and the Tuchuns Chang Tso-lin and Tsao Kun, defeated their opponents, than new symptoms of strife became

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manifest in the camp of the victors. Some of them (notably the President) began to display unmistakable signs of sympathy for the defeated Anfu leaders who had sought refuge and protection as guests of the Japanese Minister. Tuan Chi-jui, allowed to retire, with the honours and profits of war, is living as a prosperous citizen in close proximity to the Presidential mansion. Little Hsü, for whose arrest a large reward was originally offered, has been allowed to escape from the Japanese Legation and is believed to have returned to his former stamping-grounds in Mongolia. The "two traitors," Tsao Ju-lin and Lu Tsung-ju, removed from office in disgrace as the result of the students' violent agitation two years ago because of their financial dealings with Japan, are now the President's honoured guests and confidential advisers. General Wu Pei-fu has been relegated to the background by common consent of the scheming politicians, and with him the National Convention idea has been quietly shelved. It is the declared intention of the Government, or rather of the chieftains who for the moment control the situation, to convoke a new Parliament so soon as an agreement concerning the spoils of war can be concluded with Lu Yung-ting, who commands what is left of public opinion and military forces in Kuangtung. It is evidently to the interest of all the warring factions at Peking to come to terms with Canton, and, as before, to present the appearance of agreeing to differ in peace, because all are equally anxious to borrow money from the Consortium, and it would seem natural to expect that all loans from that quarter must cease so long as the nation is at war with itself. But even if such an agreement were concluded, it might produce a loan, but it could not bring either peace or a Parliament to Peking. Leaving the South out of the question, the leaders of the Chihli faction are evidently incapable of sinking their individual ambitions and greed in any common purpose of patriotism. Hardly had they made an end of congratulations and rejoicings

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

A WAYSIDE SHRINE (AT SIAU-CHI, ON THE HWEI RIVER, CHEKIANG).

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over the defeat of the Anfu faction, than Chang Tso-lin and Tsao Kun began insisting on their respective claims to any money that might be forthcoming, for payment of the expenses of their week's campaign (the combined total of these claims, as stated by the native Press, amounting to some $40,000,000). At the same time, they began to compete with each other to secure the disbanded troops of the two Frontier Defence Corps, while the President, on his side, proceeded to strengthen his own hand by recruiting two new brigades of troops through his representative, Wang Huai-ching. So, while the shadow of famine spread darkly over the Northern provinces, these leaders of the people continued to squander the public substance and to sow new seeds of civil strife. The net result of the latest political upheaval has been to diminish the power of some of the smaller Tuchuns, and to increase that of the great political chieftains, so that at the beginning of October there were five clearly-marked spheres of influence in China, each ruled by its own satrap, and each more or less hostile to all the others. Both the President and Chang Tso-lin are now openly denounced as being more completely subject to Japanese influence than the Anfu Club itself, and the youthful patriots of the Treaty Ports are beginning to declare that the new era cannot dawn until President Hsü has disappeared from public life. And so, *da capo*. The fact that no body of politicians at Peking carries any weight whatsoever outside the metropolis, is gradually producing a vague movement in favour of provincial autonomy and the creation of a Central Government entrusted only with international and inter-provincial relations; but its advocates can offer no convincing arguments to justify the hope that such a solution would put an end to inter-provincial strife. On the other hand, the restoration of General Chang Hsün and other avowed monarchists to place and power, under the immediate patronage of the President and Chang Tso-lin, leads many observers to the belief that a restoration of

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the Throne is not only probable, but that, because it would create a rallying-point for disinterested loyalty, it offers the best, if not the only, hope of restoring something like normal conditions and tranquillity throughout the land.

The matrimonial alliance concluded in September between the families of Chang Tso-lin and Tsao Kun, and the *rapprochement* of these two powerful Tuchuns with Tuan Chi-jui and his followers, point to a new combination and consolidation of power in the hands of these mandarins, who will undoubtedly exercise that power in accordance with the traditions of their class. In their hands, Cabinets, Presidents, Parliaments, the Republic itself, become empty names, toys for the delectation of innocents abroad. And it may safely be predicted that under their administration the ascendancy of Japanese influence at Peking will be increased, rather than diminished, and that the patriots and malcontents of Young China will therefore be in a position to denounce the Northern militarists more vehemently than ever, and new combinations of military forces will be formed in the Central and Southern provinces to "punish the traitors."

Amidst all the tangled web of frauds and futility produced by the word-spinners who live on and around the warring Tuchuns, one instructive and somewhat pathetic figure emerges, that of the Kiangsu Tuchun, Li Shun, who committed suicide on October 12, leaving a quarter of his fortune (estimated at $10,000,000) to famine relief and another quarter to educational work. Li Shun and his career recall to mind, in some ways, the orthodox type of Confucianist scholar-mandarin; and his death, offered up in a valedictory message as a plea for national unity, struck the kind of note which always makes a powerful appeal to the mind of the masses. But the pathos of his death lies in the utter futility of a self-sacrifice that had no vital principle behind it. General Li Shun, as a Tuchun, was no

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better and no worse than most of his contemporaries. As leader of the League of Tuchuns which set out to destroy the power of Tuan Chi-jui, and subsequently as chief Northern delegate at the Peace Conference, he displayed in his public utterances a genuine desire to put an end to the strife of the warring parties. In a manifesto which he issued last June, he called on all good citizens to unite against the Anfu Club; at the same time, he begged the latter to abandon its evil ways, to cease from selling the country to foreign capitalists, and unite for the preservation of China. He was a professed progressive, a friend of the student movement, and an advocate of the National Convention; nevertheless, when the Anfu party had been overthrown and all the Liberal elements in the country were calling for an immediate disbandment of troops, he behaved just like any other Tuchun, that is to say, he cordially supported the movement, while increasing his own forces by five brigades. In other words, like most of his colleagues, he was a theoretical reformer and a practical reactionary. His suicide was generally attributed to the combined effects of illness and of chagrin at having been deprived of a certain amount of "face" by Chang Tso-lin; but his valedictory words, in the classical manner, imputed no blame, either to friend or foe. "In vain," he declared, "have I worked for the unification of my beloved country; "I can see no sign of any agreement. It is my dying "wish that all my fellow-citizens, men and women alike, "should cease from striving after wealth and rank, and "do everything in their power to save China from destruc- "tion. If each were willing to sacrifice something for his "country, then might I smile in Hades." For which parting words, according to Chinese ideas, much will be forgiven Li Shun. He had found in civil war a profession which brought him no small share of wealth and power. Originally a captain in the service of the Viceroy Yuan Shih-k'ai, he had thrown in his lot with the revolutionaries in 1911, and on that flood of civil

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war been borne on to fortune. But in the end he made restitution, and for the rest, it could never be said of him that he had traffic with the alien money-lender, or sold any of his country's birthright to the foreigner.

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## CHAPTER VI

### CHINA: THE PROBLEM OF RECONSTRUCTION

ANY suggestions for the reorganisation of China's finances and the reconstruction of the Central Government upon a new basis of effective authority must proceed on the assumption that the commercial Powers chiefly concerned in the solution of the problem—America, England, and Japan—are sincerely desirous of solving it and are prepared to co-operate to that end. In particular, it must be assumed that, given a clear indication of policy, the growing strength of genuine Liberalism in Japan will be able to bring sufficient weight of public opinion to bear upon the Jingo element of the Military Party to induce it to desist from further encroachments upon China's territory and sovereign rights. It may be objected that these assumptions admit of wide discussion. No doubt they do; nevertheless, they are not more Utopian than those upon which the civilised world proposes to reconstruct Central Europe, and they are much less involved. The question of Japanese policy in China will be discussed in a later chapter; for the moment, I would merely observe that neither the utterances of public men in Japan nor the general tendency of public opinion in that country precludes the hope of a practical agreement, by means of which the reconstruction of China may be undertaken in a liberal spirit of co-operation, and the attitude recently displayed by the Japanese Government towards the Consortium justifies this hope. Speaking from personal observation, I am convinced that the intellectual and progressive movement in Japan—especially conspicuous in the younger genera-



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tion—is genuinely in favour of a policy towards China which shall cultivate her friendship and preserve her independence and self-respect, whilst assisting in the development of her latent resources. But if the forces of conservatism and military Imperialism should still prove to be too strong; if Japan, when faced with the necessity of coming to a definite decision, should decline to co-operate in an international scheme for the reorganisation of China, there can be no immediate prospect of any peaceful solution of the problem. In that case, matters must continue to drift, and the helpless Chinese people to suffer all the penalties of chaotic misrule until the country's disorders precipitate a new crisis and make it once again a cockpit and centre of international strife.

The Western world has had enough on its hands for the past six years without troubling itself about China, so that, generally speaking, it knows little or nothing about the course of events in the Far East during this period. It is generally understood that Japan has taken advantage of the opportunities which the war gave her to develop her economic and political position in China by measures which have been severely criticised; that the Peking Government is hopelessly insolvent; and that Young China's political activities—as indicated by the student movement and the anti-Japanese boycott—have become a conspicuous feature of the situation. But, because the masses of the Chinese people are unrepresented by platform or Press, and themselves wholly inarticulate, the central fact of the situation is commonly ignored. That fact is, that the present condition of the country, its internecine strife, fiscal disorganisation, and administrative chaos, with all the burden of suffering which these conditions inflict upon the peasantry and traders, are no new thing. Chaos and confusion arose with the disappearance of the authority of the Manchu dynasty, and have continued ever since, gradually undermining the ancient fabric of established law and order, to the point that every province is now a law unto itself.

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This fact must be emphasised, if only to remind those who may have forgotten it, that the problem with which the world has to deal in China, is not due to any recent or transient causes, nor can it be ever solved by temporary or partial measures. There is a tendency very prevalent amongst the supporters of Young China's political aspirations, and advocates of "self-determination," to ignore this all-important fact. It is a tendency which has already done a great deal of harm, and is likely to do much more.

Long ago, Prince Ito, wisest of Oriental statesmen, uttered words of warning, addressed to those who believed in the capacity of Young China to organise and lead a truly national movement:

"Within the last few years," he said, "there has been, no doubt, a considerable and very rapid change, but even that change is not so much a spontaneous growth from within, as the result of the importation of Western ideas from without by Young Chinese who have been educated abroad and who have returned to their own country not only imbued with Western conceptions, but so greatly estranged from all the old Chinese conceptions that they almost as much lost contact with the Chinese point of view as if they themselves were foreigners by birth. Hence the crudity and violence of the doctrines which they teach. . . . The young students form a very vocal and not unimportant body of agitators, many of whom are animated by excellent intentions, but they have hardly any roots in the country, and they can hardly be said to form a class capable of directing any practical course of action."

Prince Ito's words were written eleven years ago, that is to say, two years before the Chinese revolution. Since then Young China's "crudity and violence" have rather increased than diminished, but of any practical course of action it has given no sign. A number of the agitators to whom Prince Ito then referred have since attained to high official posts under the Republic. Some have

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become Members of Parliament, others members of the Government, and some have even become Tuchuns (provincial Military Governors). They have had their full share of opportunity in the Metropolitan Ministries, in the provincial *yamêns*, and in the missions and commissions of the diplomatic and Consular services; but in none of these, as a class, have they made good. In their lack of integrity, disinterested patriotism, and constructive efficiency, they have remained, almost without exception, typical mandarins, whilst they have frequently lacked the sense of dignity which, with all its faults, the mandarinate displayed under the old régime. But Young China still continues to proclaim all the old illusory visions of a Promised Land of peace and plenty, to be attained by the magic of a paper Constitution, all the old familiar programme of a New Era, to be achieved by replacing the "Ins" by the "Outs." Indeed, in the matter of professions and aspirations, the polished periods of Mr. C. T. Wang and Mr. Wellington Koo bear so striking a family likeness to the rhetoric of Mr. Sun Yat-sen, that one cannot help wondering whether the student of to-day has ever read the high-sounding manifestoes of the founder of the Republic.

Whatever may have been the hopes and dreams of ten years ago, the Chinese themselves, the merchants, gentry, and solid elements in the country, have certainly ceased to believe in the vision of the Promised Land. On the contrary, they are frankly weary of the fruitless clamour of the politicians and the shameless rapacity of the new bureaucracy. They are all convinced that what China needs above all else, is ten years of uninterrupted peace, of law and order. Given such a breathing space, together with the development of the country's natural resources, there is nothing to prevent her from becoming one of the most productive and prosperous nations on earth. But this peace she cannot possibly achieve under her present rulers, unless forcibly assisted from without; of that there is no longer any doubt.

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

"SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN WAYS."

*B. T. Prideaux*]

HOMEWARD AT EVENING.

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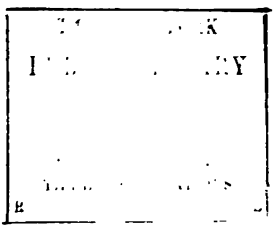

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If therefore the Powers desire to see China's ancient civilisation preserved, if they desire to develop a great centre of trade and to remove a grave source of danger in the Far East, that assistance must be forthcoming, and without delay.

As to the manner in which this assistance should be rendered and the objects towards which it should be directed, differences of opinion will necessarily arise, and the conflicting interests of the Powers concerned will, no doubt, find their reflection in the working out of any practical scheme for co-operative action. But disinterested opinion, including that of the most influential Chinese, is united at the outset in one conclusion, namely, that the first step which the Powers must take is to insist upon the disbandment of the provincial Tuchuns' so-called armies. If China is to escape disruption, this step has become imperatively necessary. Many leading Chinese officials would be prepared to advocate it openly, though now they dare not, if they were once convinced that the friendly Powers would see the thing through. They are quite clear in their minds that if China is to survive, not only her Government, but her Army must be centralised. And the Army, when centralised, should not exceed 250,000 men, enough to provide, say, a brigade for each province, with a mobile force of four or five picked divisions at Peking to be available for the suppression of disorder at any given point.

The present four-Power financial Consortium, initiated by the United States, has made disbandment under foreign supervision one of the conditions of new loans. The Chinese Government professes to desire this disbandment, but it will not consent to the necessary effective supervision, except under firm pressure. It will try its best to "save its face" and preserve its own opportunities of "squeeze" as well as those of the Tuchuns; a firm front and a clear-cut policy on the part of the Consortium Powers in this matter are there-

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fore absolutely necessary. There must be no more independent loans by Japan or by any other Power, no further acquiescence in the plea of the mandarins in power at Peking that failure to supply them with funds will involve a rising of their mutinous troops, with the usual looting and bloodshed. That argument has served to fill the pockets of the Tuchuns with unearned increment for the past four years. A revolution would be cheaper and healthier than to yield to it again.

But there is no danger of a real revolution, for the simple reason that the masses, and most of the classes, are all in sympathy with the disbandment scheme. They are tired of being harried and plundered. Certain of the Tuchuns would probably defy the Government—especially those of the distant provinces of the South and West—just as the Southern supporters of the Ming dynasty defied the Manchus for some years before they were led back into the family fold. But once they were convinced that there was no more foreign money to be made out of the pretence of civil war, and that public opinion was all against them, there would be but little heart left in the business of rebellion. Let the work of disbandment begin with the nearer Northern and Central provinces, where, as I have said, several Tuchuns are quite ready to retire on large fortunes into private life. Let the disbandment in each case be thorough and irrevocable. Let each soldier's pay and arrears be issued to him, with transportation to his home if necessary, under the direct supervision of a competent representative of the Consortium, and only after he has handed over his rifle, ammunition, and equipment. Let it be understood that henceforth the executive and administrative authority in each province will be vested in the Civil Governor and maintained by his police force; also that any military force stationed in the province will be paid and controlled by the Central Government. Let half a dozen provinces be dealt with in this way and their fiscal relations with the capital restored, so that the

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nucleus of a national revenue is assured, and the rest should be only a matter of time and determination. If Chihli, Shantung, Shansi, Anhui, Kiangsu, and Chekiang can be gently but firmly induced to support an authoritative Government at Peking, instead of their present predatory barons and bandits, and if Peking, receiving regular remittances from these rich provinces, is thus enabled to command the loyal services of a reliable fighting force, the combative ardour of the Southern chiefs would fade like the smile of the Cheshire cat. For their armies have lived for booty, not for battles, and the last thing that they desire is real fighting. They know that no Parliament is worth it.

Here let me digress to observe that, as a matter of internal politics, the composition and command of the Central Government's standing Army present certain obvious difficulties. Not only will the fierce jealousy of rival chieftains be aroused (as it was last summer in the case of Tuan Chi-jui and Little Hsü) if any party waxes strong enough to deny the others a share of the spoil, but there must always be a risk, as matters stand, that any powerful Commander-in-Chief may be tempted to attempt a *coup d'état* on his own account, like that of General Chang Hsün in 1917. But this is a risk which must be taken—one cannot make omelettes without breaking eggs—and the prospect of a Dictatorship, such as Yuan Shih-k'ai exercised for three years, is greatly preferable to the prospect of interminable strife. Above all else to-day, China needs a wise, strong leader who shall give the people peace. But of his coming, there is, alas, as yet no sign.

In connection with the scheme for the disbandment of the troops, it has been suggested by the Chinese that, in order to prevent the disbanded men from becoming bandits and freebooters, the foreign Powers should undertake to provide funds for their employment on road-making, or other public works, for a term of years. This, be it observed, is merely an old mandarin dodge in

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a new dress—an attempt to obtain a little more ready money by appealing to the credulity or the benevolence of the foreigner. Assuming that the number of *bona-fide* soldiers to be disbanded in the first instance is about 600,000 men (a liberal figure if the four "rebel" provinces of the South are not included), it is simply ludicrous to suggest that they could not find their way back peacefully into civil life without financial assistance, when once they have received the full amount of pay and arrears due to them. To say that they would become bandits and outlaws, is to cast immediate doubts upon any scheme of disbandment which is not rigorously supervised by foreign experts, and to emphasise the fact that these must be experts with the temperament of the man from Missouri. Disbanded and unpaid soldiers who carry their rifles into private life are likely to become brigands, no doubt; but it would go very hard with any Chinese who tried to terrorise his fellow-countrymen in his native place without weapons and merely on the strength of his military reputation. There is always a submerged tenth in China, an element of disorder, hungry and eager for pillage and plunder whenever the strong arm of authority is relaxed, but with these the community may be trusted to deal in its own drastic way, sooner or later. With the armed and semi-organised plunderers of the Tuchuns' armies, the case is different. Against them the common people are defenceless.

As a matter of expediency, it might be found advisable to organise a Public Works Commission, for the construction of roads, railways, river conservancy, and other much-needed improvements. These would provide employment, not only for ex-soldiers, but for a much more deserving class, the innocent victims of floods and famines. It might even be expedient at first to allow payment for such public works to be defrayed out of a foreign loan, but this only on condition that every dollar of the money be accounted for, with proper vouchers, under the expert direction of responsible foreigners. Broadly speaking,

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and except to meet special emergencies, borrowing, for anything except legitimate self-supporting enterprises, should be sternly discouraged. This obviously means a clear-cut policy and concerted action between the Governments concerned, not only towards the insatiable borrower, but towards the highly respectable lenders, the banks and financial syndicates, whose lucrative business of bond-selling has contributed in no small degree to hasten China's progress towards insolvency.

To preserve China's self-respect and the smooth working of the necessary measures of reform, it would, of course, be best that the initiative should come from the Chinese themselves, in the form of a request for the expert assistance required. In any case China's sovereignty and dignity must be preserved, by maintenance of all the outward and visible signs of her independent authority. But with Young China loudly clamouring at their doors, the older and wiser heads, be they mandarins or merchants, will never dare openly to advocate foreign financial control, even in the matter of disbandment, though behind closed doors nearly all of them are ready to confess that there is no other way of salvation. Whilst at Peking in February last I heard much cautious talk on this subject, many fervent wishes expressed, even in high places, that England and America might come forward and help to put an end to the chaos and corruption of the Tuchun régime. And there were many who attributed the country's present dangers and discontents to the social demoralisation born of " Western learning " and the revolution—to the younger generation's lack of respect for the family system, upon which the whole fabric of society depends in the East. These men (some of them bear great names) are convinced that only the restoration of the Throne can secure respect for the Central Government in the provinces, let the Powers do what they may in the matter of finance. But as a class they are timid, with the ingrained timidity of Orientals—fearful of assassination, fearful of losing their wealth;

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and their inveterate distrust of each other precludes all hope of their displaying any collective and patriotic initiative. We saw the same thing in 1900, when the Boxers kept the whole Manchu Court and its Chinese dignitaries in terrified silence.

As an indication of the mandarin attitude on the subject of disbandment, the attitude which has continually distinguished both sides at the make-believe Peace Conference at Shanghai, the "Plan for the Military and Civil Reorganisation of China," submitted to that Conference in 1919 by Chu Chi-chien, is worthy of attention. Chu Chi-chien, a Southerner, age about fifty, is an official of unusually wide experience, courage and organising ability. By conviction a staunch Monarchist, he supported Yuan Shih-k'ai's attempt to restore the Throne in 1916, and after Yuan's death retired for a while from public life, to manage a colliery in Shantung. During the last years of the Manchu dynasty he held many posts, first under the Viceroy of Chihli, then as Chief of Police at Peking, and finally under the Viceroy Hsü (now President of the Republic) in Manchuria. In all of these he displayed unusual energy and initiative. After 1912, under the Republic, he held office, first as Minister of Communications, and then as Minister of the Interior. To him are due the present satisfactory condition of the roads, police and municipal administration at Peking. When, therefore, at the President's request, he accepted the post of chief Northern delegate to the Peace Conference at Shanghai, something different from the usual mandarin line of thought was expected from him. The hope was doomed to disappointment. His plan for the reorganisation of China might have been compiled by the greybeards of the Board of Revenue under the Manchus: its figures and arguments are the stuff that mandarin dreams are made of, having no relation to actualities. He quoted from the national Budget as confidently as Sun Yat-sen himself, cheerfully ignoring the fact that the thing itself exists only in name; and

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his conclusion of the whole matter, as far as disbandment was concerned, amounted to a proposal to reduce the existing number of troops (which he put at 1,300,000) by half, at a cost of over $200,000,000, to be borrowed abroad.

Mr. Chu prefaced this modest scheme with the observation that, since the Great War, the world has come to "seek a new order, in which right will reign, reason will rule, justice will prevail, and happiness will be the pursuit of life. It is no exaggeration," he declares, "to say that the dawn of a happier period is imminent—so imminent, indeed, that in this very country strong efforts are being made to effect a reorganisation which will lay the national foundation." The Tuchuns' delegates in meeting assembled were, no doubt, impressed (they have heard of a good many New Eras dawning since 1911), but, whatever their views on the millennium, they certainly agreed with his practical conclusion, namely, that "in the last analysis, no change can be effected without money, and any social structure based on an insufficient financial foundation is bound to fall." It was not a very lofty conception of the true foundation of the new order, but it undoubtedly represented every mandarin's ideas of political economy.

Coming to the Army, Mr. Chu estimated that "there are not less than one hundred Army Corps at present in the country." In another place he gave the actual figures (on paper) for each province, showing a grand total of 1,290,657 men, of whom 540,344 were supposed to be under the order of the Central Government. He proposed to disband the "superfluous troops" of the Central Government and of the provinces simultaneously, the operation to take a year or eighteen months. He advised that "the Ministry of War and the provincial authorities should jointly be held responsible for the disbanding of those troops which are considered unnecessary." As each Tuchun naturally considers the troops of his neighbours to be unnecessary, and as

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none of them recognises the authority of Peking, the scheme was not likely to bring China much nearer to the dawn. It ignored the vital point of the whole question, namely, how to guarantee that the troops, once disbanded, would not reappear forthwith under other names and other commanders? Mr. Chu incidentally referred to the fact that, in 1913, a foreign "reorganisation" loan was raised and with it thirty Army Corps were disbanded at a cost of $30,000,000. Some 316,000 soldiers and 19,000 officers were then supposed to have retired into civil life. But he said nothing of the equally interesting fact that the Chinese Army (on paper) is no smaller to-day than before that disbandment took place—in other words, that the "reorganisation loan" reform was a sorry farce, profitable only to the officials and financiers concerned.

I draw attention to this officially proposed scheme because, in spite of its almost childish crudity, it indicates some of the difficulties with which the present Consortium Powers' representatives will be confronted when they come to discuss practical details with the Chinese Government. The results of the 1913 loan have proved conclusively that no further assurances or half measures will serve in the vital matter of supervision over expenditure. Nobody doubts for a moment that the whole Chinese Army would be delighted to return to its ancestral homes with all arrears of pay and a three months' bonus. The question is, however, who is going to prevent the Tuchuns from replacing them next morning by a new set of loot-hungry coolies?

Mr. Chu's memorandum, for all its vagueness, throws a good deal of light upon the pitiful plight to which the Chinese Government has been reduced by the corruption of its own officials and the refusal of the provinces to remit their quota of revenues. "The Army," he declared in a sudden burst of frankness, "has become an insupportable burden to the nation; until the military are permanently deprived of their usurped power, it is vain

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to look for any real improvements in the civil administration." Yet, realising this, his only remedy was "a foreign loan which will cover all these items," its proceeds to be divided between Peking and the provinces. There is no word in all his elaborate plan for the "proper and efficient audit" to which the Chinese Government pledged itself when borrowing in 1913, and which they then failed to carry out.

Writing of those loan negotiations, the late Mr. Willard Straight, then representative of the American financial group, observed: "The Chinese officials charged with the expenditure of the loan funds had placed every obstacle in the way of a proper and efficient audit, to which they had agreed." Because of their bad faith in this matter, the Consortium of that day stipulated that "China should herself create a system of audit in which foreigners should be employed, with powers not merely advisory, but also executive, so as to ensure the effective expenditure of loan funds borrowed, for the purposes specified." Here we have the gist of the whole matter. The "reorganisation loan" of 1913 produced a loan, but no reorganisation, in so far as the disbandment of troops was concerned. It led to the establishment of foreign supervision over the revenues of the Salt Gabelle, with immediate benefit to China's finances, but the Audit Department has never been anything more than an empty name, and its foreign adviser a monumental figure-head. Every politician in the country, irrespective of party, has opposed the effective supervision of loan funds expenditure, for the simple reason that it means the curtailment of lucrative opportunities. If China is to be saved, this opposition must be overcome; and it can be overcome if the new Consortium represents a common purpose of disinterested goodwill towards China, and united action between the Governments concerned. The problem of the Tuchuns' armies is urgent and vital; the manner in which it is dealt with will show whether there is any hope of effective reconstruction or not.

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Under the scheme of reorganisation which has been roughly outlined in London and New York by the British and American delegates to the Consortium, the question of disbandment figures on the agenda; but its place upon the list of subjects tabled for discussion by the financial groups, and the agenda list as a whole, would appear to indicate that neither the banking groups nor the Governments behind them yet recognise the paramount importance of this question. Indeed, the conditions under which the new four-Power Consortium has come into being, and the utterances of its chief spokesmen, have hitherto breathed a spirit of vague humanism and benevolent intentions which, however admirable, are somewhat difficult to associate with the natural aspirations and methods of financial syndicates. Mr. Thomas W. Lamont (representing J. P. Morgan & Co.) declares, for example, that the four Powers have come together in the forming of the Consortium because they had decided "to put an end to the old pre-war system of international jealousies and rivalry." Sir Charles Addis put the same thing in simpler words when he defined the principle on which the new Consortium is founded as "the substitution of international co-operation in China for international competition." So far, so good; but even at this stage the fact confronts us that, as a matter of goodwill and freewill, the Chinese are unlikely to encourage the abolition of competition; and it is not recorded that international jealousies ceased to play their part when, in order to put an end to competition, the Germans were admitted into the old Consortium in 1909. But let that pass. The new Consortium has, at all events, achieved the first requisite of success in its working understanding with the Japanese Government on the subject of future enterprises and concessions in Manchuria and Mongolia. It has also done good work in its agreement for the unification of the whole of the railway system in China, though it remains to be seen whether a Railway Board under a Chinese Minister, assisted by

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

THINGS ANCIENT AND MODERN (IN A TEMPLE AT HANGCHOW).

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four foreign engineers of different nationalities, is a practical proposition. For the rest, it is apparently content to rely upon the "new spirit" in China to make international co-operation pleasant and profitable for all concerned. Writing to the *New York Times* last July, Mr. Lamont explained the new policy toward China, "a policy made possible through American initiative," in the following significant passage:

"China herself has, in the five years of the war, undergone great changes. Outwardly, to be sure, she bears an appearance of disorganisation, but underneath there flows a new and powerful current of nationality, a spirit fostered by the great and influential student bodies, by many earnest intellectuals, former pupils of American missionaries, who are now giving their lives to develop China from a people into a nation, so that the Powers recognised that it was no longer a slumbering giant with which they had to deal, but one waking into a national self-consciousness."

Mr. Lamont's tribute to the political activities of American missionaries is interesting, but readers familiar with the realities of life in China are likely to concur in the opinion that, approached in this spirit, the problem of disbandment is not likely to be solved by the Consortium; moreover, between the lines of the utterances of its chief sponsors, one perceives that, in spite of this Wilsonian idealism, as practical men they are not asking too much from the new spirit, or asking it with any great urgency. According to Sir Charles Addis, whose knowledge of the East is considerably greater than that of his American colleague, "China can only be saved by her own exertions." Nor is he under any illusions concerning the Consortium. "It is at present only a machine. Before it becomes a living organism, it must have breathed into it the spirit of life." In his opinion, "China would be well advised to accept this offer in the spirit in which it is made. It may be that she will reject it. Even so, the Consortium will remain. . . . It may even

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serve, by God's grace, as a means to lay one more stone on the foundation of the temple of peace."

God's grace will have to be very bountifully bestowed if the business of cosmopolitan finance is to become a corner-stone of that temple. But grace or no grace, it is evident, I think, that if the commercial Powers really desire to put an end to chaos in China, they will need to devise some form of concerted action and machinery other than that of a group of syndicates, whose ultimate objects, say what you will, are financial, and whose natural inclination, in avoiding competition, must be to follow the line of least resistance. It is also evident (Mr. Lamont himself must see it) that, so far as Young China is concerned, a Consortium is damned at the outset which accepts Japan's position in Shantung as *chose jugée*. Finally, it is absolutely certain that the political faction in power at Peking, no matter what its name and antecedents, will not accept the Consortium's proffered "co-operation" so long as they can borrow elsewhere, unless they are sure in advance that they will still be able to reduce to a dead letter the conditions of a loan agreement which stipulate for strict supervision over the expenditure of loan funds, and especially of funds borrowed for the disbandment of troops. It may, therefore, safely be predicted that, unless the Governments concerned place the question of disbandment in its right place, at the head of the Consortium's agenda, and insist upon it in a manner very different to that of those who proffer loans, the Tuchuns' armies will not be disbanded, and the Consortium will continue to devote its activities and resources to matters of immediate financial interest, such as currency reform and railway construction. The crucial problem will still remain unsolved.

Even assuming, however, that the problem of disbandment shall have been partially solved by united action of the Powers, and the provincial administration transferred from the military to the civil authorities;

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even if we assume that gradually, province by province, the Central Government's authority and fiscal machinery have been restored and parliamentary government made more responsible and more representative: the real task of reconstruction will only have begun, will, in fact, have then been rendered possible. The reorganisation of the country's civil administration, finances, railways, and system of justice, together with measures for the development of its economic resources, will still necessitate years of honest patriotic effort on the part of the Chinese themselves. Given peace within their borders, and a genuine desire on the part of the friendly Powers to assist them, one may reasonably hope that the thing can be done. Honesty in the public service can only be secured from without; but, given this, there is enough intelligence, administrative ability and patriotism available in China to make her a prosperous and united nation within a comparatively short space of time.

It is important to remember that insistence upon the vital condition of a " proper and efficient audit " of official accounts, wherever foreign loans are involved, need not in any way conflict with the maintenance of China's sovereignty, unimpaired and unthreatened. On the contrary, it offers the only possible chance of preserving that sovereignty and of gradually enabling China to regain her proper place and dignity in the comity of nations. Nor does it involve any new departure. It merely means the extension of a system which, with China's consent, and to her infinite advantage, has already been in force for seventy years. Had it not been for the revenues honestly collected and regularly remitted to the Central Government by the Imperial Maritime Customs since the days of the Taiping rebellion, China would long since have been faced with bankruptcy and all that it entails. The Customs service, international in its *personnel*, was brought into existence for the purpose of securing the " proper and efficient audit " which Chinese officialdom was unable to supply. But it has



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never been an *imperium in imperio*, or anything other than a loyal branch of the Chinese public service.

The same principle has been applied in the case of the Imperial railways of North China, a lucrative source of revenue to the Chinese Government. By the terms of the British loan which provided the capital for building the line, supervision of the railway's finances is vested in a British accountant. On other Chinese railways (such as the Peking–Hankow and the Tientsin–Pukou lines), where the principle of financial supervision was waived by British and French financiers because of the clamour of Young China on the one hand and the intrigues of German financiers on the other, the existing state of affairs is so undeniably rotten, that it affords the strongest possible argument for foreign financial control. Every Chinese with whom you discuss the pitiful condition of these railways (except the officials directly concerned) admits that if they were honestly handled they could not fail to become veritable gold-mines for the State. As it is, their freight and passenger rates are higher than those in England, rolling stock and permanent way are in a lamentable state, and practically no provision is made for depreciation. Even the special fund set apart for the rebuilding of the great bridge over the Yellow River on the Peking–Hankow line has disappeared, devoured for "administrative expenses" by the mandarins of the new dispensation. The day is fast approaching when foreign financiers will be asked for new loans to set these railways in order.[1] Will any of the mandarins of Young China and Old, who have made fortunes by starving and squeezing these railways, subscribe towards such loans? No, they will apply to the foreigner for

[1] Since the above was written the British, and Chinese Corporation's representative in China has informed the shareholders that the net revenues of railways supervised by the Ministry of Communications have increased by 64 per cent. since 1915. At the same meeting it was announced that the Corporation had made a loan of $2,000,000 to the Chinese Government for the purchase of rolling stock, etc., for the Hupei-Hunan section of the Hankow-Canton Railway!

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further funds, while denouncing the idea of financial control in the name of " sovereign rights."

Inasmuch as nearly every source of public revenue in China has been pledged for the service of foreign loans, the Powers behind the Consortium are now in a position to extend the principle of financial control, in China's own interest, and to insist upon its effective application. Just as the revenues of the Salt Gabelle have steadily increased since even a partial system of foreign supervision was introduced in 1913, so reliable sources of income can be developed from the land tax, the wine and tobacco taxes (recently pledged for an American loan), and from the opium trade. (The tax on opium-growing, now independently levied by many provincial authorities, is bound to become a recognised and lucrative Government monopoly in the near future.) China's sources of national revenue are, I repeat, quite sufficient for the needs of government; all that is required is to protect their output from the hands of predatory officials and to restore the fiscal arrangements destroyed by the revolution.

During my recent visit to Peking, it seemed to me, when discussing the situation there, that the essential features on which I have laid stress are in danger of being frequently overlooked, if not submerged, by reason of the multitude of counsellors, experts, advisers, and Special Commissioners who live, move, and have their being in the vicinity of the Legations and the Presidential mansion. Of many nations and kindreds is the lost legion of the Chinese Government's foreign advisers. It includes all sorts and conditions of men, from ex-Ministers, ex-missionaries, and professional men of good repute, down to hirelings of the baser sort and the hungry jackals of journalism. From the cynical Chinese point of view, many of these advisers have been engaged on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, that is to say, they are neither asked nor expected to advise. Sometimes they are simply window-dressing, inanimate figures, intended to

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inspire confidence in the foreign buyer of Chinese bonds; sometimes they have been imposed on the Chinese Government as the result of international jealousies arising in the field of international finance. Many of them are held in reserve for use in emergencies, either as scapegoats or buffers, in the event of serious difficulties with their respective Legations. But whatever their record or their rôle, the result of their collective opinions and activities is to confuse the mind of any earnest seeker after truth, especially if he be a newcomer and unfamiliar with the peculiar methods of Oriental statecraft.

Over and above the voices of the professional "advisers" directly and permanently employed by the Chinese Government, there are those of a number of foreign experts, appointed or engaged to report on technical subjects, or to represent the special interests of actual or potential creditors, experts in law, finance, railways, salt, or police organisation. Behind these, again, a confused but indefatigable chorus, are the voices of the amateur advisers—missionaries, journalists, sincere friends of China—what you will. And in each of these classes there are to be found men whose professional bias or individual interest leads them to proclaim their own particular remedies for the ills that afflict the State. Thus while one clamours for currency reform, another will pin his faith to the League of Nations; while one sees salvation in the revision of the tariff, another looks for it in the making of roads and railways. And so, amidst the money-changers, scribes, and doctors, there arises a cloud of words which obscures the fundamental truth, that China is financially and politically bankrupt, and that nothing but honesty of administration, compulsorily imposed, can save her. This aspect of the situation is one which the professional adviser generally either takes for granted or discreetly ignores.

And all the while, in the background, silent, inscrutable, but ever vigilant, are the expert advisers of Dai Nippon, some four hundred Japanese military officers, attached

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

"THOSE THAT DIG AND WEAVE, THAT PLANT AND BUILD."

"JUST A SONG AT TWILIGHT."

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to China's Northern armies in fulfilment of the secret pact of 1918. Here, again, you have a fundamental fact of the situation. For it is evident that no international Consortium, intended to reform the administrative abuses and financial chaos at present existing, can ever be anything more than a pious aspiration, unless Japan agrees to abandon the policy foreshadowed by the Twenty-One Demands of May 1915. No concerted action can be inaugurated unless she decides, once and for all, to abide by the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, and to co-operate with her ally in a sincere effort to prevent further disintegration in China. Nor is it possible for Japan to become an honest partner in the Consortium so long as the terms of her secret Military Agreements remain in force and undisclosed. The exclusion of Japan's special interests in Manchuria and Mongolia from the scope of the Consortium's operations was a matter of secondary importance as compared with the effect of this Military Agreement. Not only does it paralyse the sovereignty of China at its source, but it precludes all hope of ever restoring the unity of the country. It constitutes, in fact, a violation of the fundamental principles for which the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was made. Unless it be frankly abandoned, the Consortium is stultified from the outset, and its activities can serve no purpose other than to promote the ends of financiers. This being so, it is remarkable that the Consortium Powers, and particularly the United States, should have strained at the Manchurian gnat and swallowed the camel of the Military Agreement.

To sum up: the situation of China is critical and the need for remedial measures urgent. I have endeavoured to suggest how these may be applied with some hope of success, and that the common interest of the commercial Powers concerned makes it advisable to apply them without further delay. That the country as a whole would be grateful for the restoration of law and order, no matter from what source, is indisputable. There

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remains therefore only the question, is any continuity of concerted action between the Powers, and particularly, in the first place, between Great Britain and the United States, a matter of practical possibility, and, if so, under what conditions? Public opinion in America, so far as one can gauge it, would lead to the conclusion that no clear-cut policy in Far Eastern affairs can be expected from the State Department for some months at least. If that be so, China's difficulties and dangers are likely to be greatly increased, and with them the risk of serious complications in the future. As far as Japan is concerned, everything justifies the belief that the moment is opportune for coming to a new and comprehensive understanding, which would make the Consortium a practical instrument for reconstructive work in China. My reasons for this belief are based on a close study of the present position of affairs in Japan, to which the reader's attention will now be directed.

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## CHAPTER VII

### JAPAN: HER VITAL PROBLEM

If, as I have endeavoured to show, the only practical way of preserving China's independence as a nation lies in the adoption by the Consortium Allies of a common policy of helpful and disinterested friendship towards her, it is evident that, in the first place, everything possible should be done to bring about more cordial relations between the United States and Japan. No one who takes an interest in this question can travel, as I have recently done, in the United States and in the Far East, without perceiving that on both sides the differences and misunderstandings that have arisen during the last few years are often reflected in a dangerous state of tension. Yet there is really nothing of irreconcilable difference in the questions now at issue between the two nations, nothing which could not be satisfactorily settled with a little goodwill and a sense of fair play on both sides. The trouble is, that the goodwill is not likely to come into play so long as a powerful section of the Press in both countries panders to the Jingo element by fomenting jealous suspicions and exciting popular passion. Neither America nor Japan wants war, either over the Californian question or Shantung or Manchuria, but in both countries there are elements at work whose active propaganda tends to produce increasing irritation, and to create in the public mind a belief that sooner or later war is inevitable.

It were idle to shut one's eyes to the fact that the elimination of Russia, and the emergence of the United States as a great military Power, have completely changed the balance of power in the Far East, and that, as a result,



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new lines of national antagonism, new conflicts of economic interests, have become manifest. It is also undeniable that, so long as China remains in her present state, she must be a source of danger to the peace of the world. Nevertheless, if there be any virtue in statesmanship, anything vital in the new impulses and ideals which have sought expression in the League of Nations, it should be quite possible for America and Japan to work together on terms of friendship in the Far East, commercial rivalry and differences of opinion notwithstanding.

But "he who knows only his own side, knows little of that." Most of the present misunderstandings and consequent irritation are not due to any distinctive racial antagonism, but merely to popular ignorance. One half of the world does not know how the other half lives. It is very necessary that the American people should know how Japan lives, in order to see the Far Eastern problem in its true light. Humanly speaking, the salvation of China and the peace of the Orient depend largely upon a just appreciation of the whole situation by public opinion in the United States; given this, it should be possible to find a solution for all outstanding questions, even such questions as the Yellow Peril and the "open door."

I propose in the first instance to trace the connection between Japan's national policies and her economic situation, so that the reader may be able to judge whether those policies are dictated by a wanton spirit of aggression, or by imperative necessity, or by both. It is hardly possible for the average foreigner, unless he has seen and studied the causes and results of economic pressure in the Far East, to make due allowance for the absence in Oriental statecraft of the altruism and lofty idealism which are so conspicuously associated with American statesmanship. Even the most imaginative students at a distance can have but a faint conception of the fierceness of the struggle for life which was the East's birth-burden centuries ago.

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The results of economic pressure in Japan are far-reaching, but the problem itself is very simple. It is merely a question of providing food for a population which already exceeds the limit that the country's soil can support, and which is debarred by our Exclusion Acts from seeking its livelihood in less congested countries overseas. The problem, be it observed, is only one of many manifestations of the unpleasant truth, sternly emphasised by the World War, that the pressure of population upon the world's food supply has become, and must remain, acute. The severity of this pressure in Japan is grimly indicated by the death-rate, which averages 21·5 per thousand.

The fundamental facts of the situation in Japan are: (1) That with a birth-rate of 32 per thousand, the population increases annually at the rate of about 750,000; (2) that, in the last ten years, the inhabitants of Japan proper (that is, excluding Korea and Formosa) have increased from 50,000,000 to 57,000,000, giving an average of 380 persons to the square mile; (3) that during this period, the area of land under cultivation has been increased by 5 per cent. and the rice production by 4 per cent., as against an increase of 12 per cent. in the number of mouths to feed; and (4) that so long as the present birth-rate is maintained, the nation must depend more and more upon imported food supplies.

There is no possibility of materially increasing either the productivity of the soil or the area under cultivation. Certain arm-chair theorists, having in mind the successful result of the "Wisconsin Idea" as applied to American agriculture, are wont to argue that similar results might be obtained by similar methods in China and Japan. I have even seen an enthusiastic attempt to introduce rice-planting by machinery in China, oblivious of the fact that agricultural man-power in that country is far cheaper than any fuel-driven machine. Those who have studied the matter know that in no other part of the world has the productivity of the soil been developed by intensive culture as it has been for centuries in China and Japan;

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nowhere else has the stern law of necessity taught the farmer to struggle with such dogged determination against the law of diminishing returns. In Japan the rice-fields not only fill the valleys, but everywhere on the hill-sides you will find them, terraced and artificially irrigated at an incredible cost of human labour. As I journeyed last February from Mogi to Kobe, by the railway which skirts the beautiful shore of the Inland Sea, it seemed to me that the villages have grown perceptibly larger and the rice-fields smaller, in the last ten years. The dead take up no portion of the food-growing area here, as they do in China; but one cannot see the children swarming in these close-clustering villages without asking oneself, can these tiny fields be still further sub-divided, and if not, what peaceful solution of the problem can there be other than in wholesale emigration? [1]

In August 1918, the steadily increasing cost of rice led to serious rioting at Kobe, Tokyo, and other industrial centres; the violence of the crowd and the organised character of their attacks upon the property of war millionaires, were very significant features of the outbreak, and of the social changes which industrialism has produced and is producing in the larger cities of Japan. The disturbances were not quelled before a good many civilians had been injured and much property destroyed. In the end, the Government practically justified the rioters by making large grants of free rice to the distressed districts, and these were followed up by a public subscription list, in which the war millionaires figured conspicuously. The moral of this outbreak has not been lost, either on the Government or on the classes immediately affected by the high price of food and the increasing burdens of taxation.

[1] According to figures recently published, there are 6,000,000 farmer families in Japan, whose average holding is 2·45 acres. The Bureau of Land Development in the Board of Agriculture is endeavouring to obtain Government grants in aid for farmers breaking up and tilling lands of the poorer kind at present uncultivated, whereby it is estimated another million families might be provided for.

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The general economic condition of the masses in Japan, largely resulting from the war, is in some respects very similar to that which obtains in England. There is a new upper class vulgarised by its wealth, a new lower class demoralised by the heady wine of democracy, and a middle class pulverised between the two. The profiteer is, if anything, more conspicuous in Japan than in America or England, for the reason that before the war he was a rare bird in these parts; as in China, the family system prevented the accumulation of great wealth in the hands of individuals. In 1914 there were only twenty-two persons in Japan who paid income tax on fortunes declared at over 100,000 *yen*; in 1918, there were 336, and, to judge by the number of new palatial residences and motor-cars in Tokyo, the tax collector should be able to find a good many more, if there were no holes in his net.

Generally speaking, the cost of living for the poorer class in Tokio has increased more rapidly than in most of the world's capitals; and Tokyo and Osaka are the centres from which microbes of unrest are propagated in Japan. Taking 1909 as a basis, with the index figure of 100, the cost of living for clerical workers had risen to 320 in 1919, and is now considerably higher. During the same period, the incomes of these workers had risen to *227*. The details on the expenditures side, as worked out from the statements of a large number of bank clerks, are interesting:

| *Items of Expenditure* | *1909* | *1914* | *1919* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rent | 12·50 | 13·75 | 20·63 |
| Rice | 11·00 | 11·77 | 50·05 |
| Other foods | 15·50 | 16·74 | 47·59 |
| Fuel | 5·00 | 5·60 | 17·90 |
| Clothes | 14·00 | 15·68 | 58·38 |
| Car fares | 2·00 | 2·58 | 3·86 |
| Sundry items | 40·00 | 44·80 | 123·20 |
| | 100·00 | 110·92 | 320·61 |

In the case of manual labourers, the figures (compiled from the statements of coal-heavers, stevedores, carters,

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and scavengers) show that, whereas the increase in the cost of living was practically the same as in the case of clerical workers, their incomes rose from 100 to 494, or more than twice as much. Also, it will be observed from the following figures, that the increase in the cost of rice affects the working classes in Japan even more directly than the price of bread affects the same classes in Europe.

| *Items of Expenditure* | *1909* | *1914* | *1919* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rent | 16·00 | 17·60 | 26·40 |
| Rice | 18·70 | 20·01 | 85·09 |
| Other foods | 18·50 | 19·98 | 56·80 |
| Fuel | 6·10 | 6·83 | 21·84 |
| Clothes | 7·30 | 8·18 | 30·44 |
| Car fares | 2·50 | 3·23 | 3·58 |
| Sundry expenses | 30·90 | 34·61 | 95·17 |
| | 100·00 | 110·44 | 319·32 |

It is small wonder that a ricksha coolie in Tokyo declines to work under 4 *yen* (at present exchange, say, $2·00) per day, and that a carpenter gets 5 *yen* or more. Small wonder that clerks and journalists (reporters are still expected to work for 50 *yen* a month) now prefer to join the ranks of manual labour. For the cost of respectability is becoming prohibitive; the price of clothes is actually an insoluble problem for many middle-class families, having risen nearly 400 per cent. in the last five years. Here are the figures for the retail prices of commodities in Tokyo:

| | *Number of Articles Taken* | *Price* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | *1909* | *1914* | *1919* |
| Foodstuffs | 33 | 100 | 107 | 296 |
| Fuel | 4 | 100 | 112 | 362 |
| Building materials | 10 | 100 | 97 | 360 |
| Clothes | 17 | 100 | 108 | 419 |
| Miscellaneous | 6 | 100 | 127 | 259 |

Roughly speaking, the rice problem began to assume its present chronic form after 1915. The nation's annual rice crop may be put at an average of 56,000,000 *koku*, and the consumption per head at 1·08 *koku* (say, 5⅓ bushels). Therefore, we find that in 1918 the country

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required to import 7,500,000 *koku* of rice, of which 4,500,000 came from foreign countries, and the rest from Korea and Formosa. As in England, the increase of population has been chiefly urban, following directly from the nation's industrial expansion; during the last decade the number of agricultural families has remained practically unchanged, but they now represent only 54 per cent. of the total population, as against 59.5 in 1909.

It is evident that, for the moment, and so long as Japan remains in a position to purchase the surplus food she requires by maintaining a balance of trade in her favour, the problem presents no insuperable difficulty. But Japanese statesmen take long views, and they realise that each year's addition to the population involves a corresponding increase in the food supply, which can only be obtained by the sale of manufactured goods in foreign markets, where Japan will have to face the keenest competition. The nation, debarred from emigration to the American and Australian continents, is, in fact, faced with three alternatives: (1) a reduction of the birth-rate; (2) increase in food supplies, to be obtained by successful industrial expansion; and (3) territorial expansion into the less-populated regions of the Asiatic continent. A reduction of the birth-rate is not to be expected, so long as either of the other two alternatives is possible, because it must involve a radical change of the race-mind and social system. Looking to the immediate future, Japanese statesmanship is therefore compelled to adopt one or both of the other alternatives. Here you have in a nutshell the explanation, if not the justification, of all Japan's diplomatic and economic activities in the Far East; of her feverish eagerness to secure new sources of supply of the raw materials needed by her expanding industries; of her claims to "special interests" in the undeveloped regions of Manchuria, Mongolia, and possibly Siberia. Japan, to put it plainly, is overcrowded and must overflow, just as Great Britain and other congested

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countries of Europe have overflowed, but there is no New World open to her surplus millions. Her expansion must proceed along the line of least resistance, that is to say, into China's loosely held and thinly populated dependencies of the Asiatic continent. Manchuria and Mongolia are thus inevitably destined to follow Korea down the path of "geographical gravitation." Morally speaking, and from the Chinese point of view, it is, of course, lamentable that any nation should expand at another's expense; but the struggle for survival between races has not ended with the Treaty of Versailles, and the principle of self-determination must always remain an empty phrase when it comes into contact with a virile instinct of self-preservation. As the French say, "Empty stomachs have no ears."

A Japanese writer in the *World's Work* has put the matter succinctly by observing that "the Japanese people must either die a saintly death in righteous starvation, or expand into the neighbour's backyard—and Japan is not that much of a saint." The editor of the *Tokyo Yorodzu*, defending his countrymen's right to emigrate to Korea, prior to the annexation of 1910, wrote with bitter irony, "How shall we dispose of our surplus millions? Our small country can hardly find room within its narrow boundaries to accommodate its yearly increase of half a million people. We cannot kill them wholesale, nor can we fill up the Sea of Japan and make dry land of it for them to settle on. We would like to go to Kansas, or anywhere but Hades, where we could escape starvation. But however hospitable America may be, she refuses to receive so many newcomers all at once. We would wish very much to cross over to Australia; but that is a White Man's Land, and although the continent is many times larger than Korea and very thinly populated, no coloured people are admitted there. We know that Korea is thickly populated, but there the least resistance is offered, and so we go there, just as Englishmen went to America and Australia and elsewhere, forcing the natives to

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make room for them, in days of yore." (As a matter of fact, the density of population in Korea is roughly 50 per cent. less than in Japan.)

It is impossible to discuss any phase or feature of the Far Eastern problem with any educated Japanese, from the highest statesman to the youngest student, without realising how deeply the national mind is imbued with a bitter sense of the injustice of the white races, which deny the principle of "racial equality" in the Western World, while insisting upon the "open door" and "equal opportunity" in the East. The resentment felt upon the subject of racial discrimination, always widespread and bitter, has been greatly aggravated by Mr. Wilson's short-sighted handling of this question at Versailles; it undoubtedly constitutes the strongest asset of the Japanese Military Party and of the Pan-Asian Imperialists, who dream, as Germany dreamt, of a great war of conquest and the overlordship of Asia by Dai Nippon. The Japanese as a race will never forget that twice, after victorious wars fought for the preservation of their national security, the white races have intervened on the side of the vanquished and practically dictated the terms of peace. Japan fought Russia for Korea and Manchuria, because Russian domination of those Chinese dependencies threatened her very existence as a nation. Control of the Korean peninsula is even more vital to the national security of Japan than that of Panama to the United States or of Egypt to Great Britain, and every Japanese chafes, more or less openly, at the discrimination which fails to recognise this undeniable fact.

The "racial equality" decision of the Versailles Conference remains inexplicable, a colossal and gratuitous blunder. Its results, plainly manifested in the deep feeling of resentment which prevailed in Japan last year, must militate against friendly co-operation for the benefit of China, unless the diplomacy of common sense is speedily invoked to put the whole matter on a rational basis. For what are the facts? Every one, unless obsessed by

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the claptrap of catch-words, knew perfectly well that when the Japanese delegates at Versailles put forward their claim to "racial equality" they had no intention of discussing an obviously futile abstraction. What they intended to claim, as Marquis Okuma and Marquis Saionji have both frankly declared, was equality of treatment for Japanese in the matter of naturalisation and land tenure in the United States and Canada, or, in the alternative, a free hand in Manchuria and Shantung. But Mr. Wilson and his colleagues allowed the catch-word to pass. Common-sense statesmanship would have replied that "racial equality" is a meaningless expression. On the field of battle, Japan has vindicated her claim to equality; in the arts, sciences, and industries, she has a record of achievement which admits of no discussion. Clear-sighted perception of the real issues involved must have led to frank admission of the obvious truth, that American and British exclusion laws are not based on racial or moral objections, but simply on grounds of imperative economic necessity. Racial equality has no more to do with the case than the flowers that bloom in the spring. If it had, the only thing that could usefully be said about it is, that economically the white races are unequal to the Asiatics, and that to admit their free competition in the labour market would simply mean race suicide for the white man. When the academic diplomacy of the Peace Conference placed on record its denial of the principle of "racial equality" (it might just as well have repudiated the signs of the Zodiac), it greatly strengthened the hands of the Jingo element in Japan. Had Mr. Wilson resisted the Japanese claim to equality of treatment as immigrants into the American continent on purely economic grounds, his position would have been incontestable, and the best elements in Japan would have understood and respected his decision. The growing force of Japanese Liberalism would have appreciated the economic argument, whereas insistence on racial discrimination has merely served to wound the

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*B. T. Prideaux*]
SCENE IN THE THEATRE QUARTER, KYOTO.

THE PALACE MOAT, TOKYO.

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dignity of a people ever keenly sensitive in matters of national pride.

The Japanese delegates might have been reminded, if necessary, that aliens have never been entitled to own land beyond the limits of the Treaty Ports in Japan, and that the Japanese Government denies to the Chinese that "racial equality" which it claims from the rest of the world. Those Japanese—and they are many—who proclaim their country's right to a place in the sun in California, Canada, and Mexico, are always quite ready to admit that discrimination against the Chinese is reasonable and right. The well-known publicist, Mr. Kawakami, puts the matter thus: "We say that the United States need not extend to the countries not yet admitted into the family of civilised Powers, the privileges which she has conferred upon the subjects of a country which has been recognised as a first-class Power; and we hope that our American critics will give us credit for what we have accomplished in the brief period of fifty years, and recognise that Japan is the only nation in Asia imbued with the modern civilisation." There you have the keynote of Japan's restless discontent; her people, citizens of "a first-class Power imbued with modern civilisation," are excluded from the United States, while Syrians, Hindus, and other Asiatics are admitted. As the Marquis Saionji tactfully puts it, "Japan has no intention of ever attempting to dictate to another country how it should regulate its internal affairs, but our normal human pride would always be irritated by specific legal discrimination against us as Japanese." To reach an amicable adjustment of this delicate question, the issue must be fairly and squarely faced, and the truth plainly declared, namely, that no white race dares to expose itself to the free competition of Asiatic labour. If Hindus and Syrians were to threaten the American continent with immigration in large numbers, they also would be required to observe a "gentleman's agreement." British Columbia has denied immigration rights to Hindus.



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Debarred from any outlet on the American shores of the Pacific, Japan is compelled to seek relief for her surplus population and food shortage on the Asiatic continent; and everything points to the conclusion that her rulers will not consent to allow the country's expansion to be confined to Korea and Manchuria. Marquis Saionji, for one, has distinctly intimated that they will not do so, and every conversation that I have had with responsible statesmen and public men in Japan leads me to believe that any deliberate attempt to restrict Japan's expansion (they may call it "peaceful penetration" in deference to the conventions) would unite the entire nation in an outburst of patriotic indignation.

Let me not be misunderstood. Militarism, that is to say, the dominance of the Imperialist war-for-war's-sake element, is undoubtedly declining in Japan, for reasons that will be explained in due course. But Japanese patriotism and the spirit of nationalism show no signs of diminishing ardour; on the contrary, Japan impresses one, almost more than any other country, by the prevalence throughout all classes of society of that spirit which Prince Ito described as "full consciousness, confidence, and intense interest in the national mission and the national destiny." Marquis Okuma seems to voice the common national sentiment when, in an article recently published, he says, "I have no doubt that Japan will propagate to China and other countries in the Orient, whose standard of civilisation is low, her new civilisation, which is a product of harmonising the Japanese and European civilisations. In a sense Japan may be said to have the mission of harmonising Eastern and Western civilisation and of propagating the new civilisation; nay, I do not hesitate to declare that this is her mission." When severe economic pressure underlies a virile nation's belief in its divine mission, it may be taken for granted, I think, that such a nation's claims to expansion are not likely to be permanently checked, except by superior force.

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At the same time, everything in Japan's history, since her first successful war with China determined the fate of Korea, justifies the conclusion that the future policy of her far-seeing rulers and their solution of her vital food problem will tend rather in the direction of economic than of territorial expansion. Several events have occurred within the past ten years to discredit the Pan-Asian dream of expansion by conquest, and to bring her statesmen to look rather to the development of her industries and the expansion of her commerce. These events, in the order of their importance, are: first, experience in Korea and Manchuria has led the Japanese to perception of the fact that they are not a colonising race, in the sense that the Anglo-Saxons are; second, the United States has come to the front as a great naval and military nation, instinctively opposed to the claims of any Asiatic Power to overlordship of the Asiatic continent and the mastery of the Pacific; third, there has been a rapid growth of unmistakable hostility to Japan in China, hostility of a kind that may seriously endanger Japanese commerce at its most vital point.

Ten years ago, when Korea was formally annexed and became part of the Japanese Empire, and later, when Japan's "special interests" in Manchuria were asserted and made effective, it was generally expected that these comparatively unpopulated and undeveloped regions would rapidly absorb a large number of Japanese emigrants. The Japanese themselves undoubtedly hoped for expansion of this kind, expansion that would tend to relieve the pressure of population in the home country. But practical experience has shown that the class of emigrant who goes to Korea and Manchuria is rarely a tiller of the soil: the great majority are artisans, shopkeepers, and small traders. In both countries, the population of every Japanese Settlement includes a large proportion of restaurant-keepers, photographers, and barbers, trades which live largely as parasites on the brothel business. The number of Japanese, generally classed as "Geisha"

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or as waitresses in the official records, is very large; even the smallest towns have their red-light sections, established under official auspices. In 1911 there were 134 Japanese houses of ill fame in the Korean capital, and the class of women inhabiting them was nearly 5 per cent. of the total Japanese community. Before the annexation of Korea, there were about 170,000 Japanese already established in the kingdom, mostly congregated at the Treaty Ports; the increase of their numbers during the last ten years has been less than 200,000. Similarly, Japanese emigration to Manchuria has been comparatively small and chiefly limited to town-dwellers. The broad fact stands out in both countries that, as a day-labourer or farmer, the Japanese emigrant cannot compete either with the native or with the Chinese settler. He is like the Frenchman, in that his heart is never in the colonising business; he goes to a foreign country, not to find there a new home, but in the hope of making enough money to retire on a modest competence to his native land. The following figures, taken from statistics supplied to me by the courtesy of President Inouye, of the Bank of Japan, are instructive:

*Number of Japanese Resident Abroad*

| | | 1913 | | 1918 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| In Asia (chiefly China and Manchuria) | Males | 64,174 | | 103,991 | |
| | Females | 56,136 | | 87,996 | |
| | | | 120,310 | | 191,987 |
| Europe | Males | 1,046 | | 875 | |
| | Females | 171 | | 124 | |
| | | | 1,217 | | 999 |
| North America | Males | 79,652 | | 98,059 | |
| | Females | 13,849 | | 37,555 | |
| | | | 93,501 | | 135,614 |
| South America | Males | 12,435 | | 20,459 | |
| | Females | 5,102 | | 10,702 | |
| | | | 17,535 | | 31,161 |
| Oceania | Males | 68,196 | | 82,683 | |
| | Females | 34,189 | | 51,378 | |
| | | | 102,385 | | 134,061 |
| | | | 334,950 | | 493,845 |

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Having recently travelled through Manchuria and Korea after an absence of ten years, I have no hesitation in saying that in both countries the natives are very much better off to-day, economically speaking, than they were before the coming of the Japanese. Their standard of living has been materially raised, the bandit has practically gone out of business in most districts, and a man may enjoy in security the fruits of his labour (political agitation excepted). The local Japanese administration has made its mistakes, Japanese agents have done those things which they ought not to have done, and the Japanese soldiers in Korea have committed acts of brutal severity; but the policy of the Imperial Government on the whole has been wise, far-seeing, and liberal. Japan has spent a great deal of money in both countries (far more than she is ever likely to get out of them), and their natural resources are being systematically developed in a way that no Korean or Chinese administration could ever think of attempting. But the fact stands out that all this development is administrative, and that most of the actual work is done by native labour. It is part of the Japanese Government's liberal policy of feeding Japan's home industries by the establishment, with all possible safeguards for the future, of new sources of raw material and new markets for the consumption of Japanese manufactures. It is a conquest by railway and bank, development unaccompanied by any large-scale movement of Japanese settlers or soldiery, and this, for the simple reason that Chinese labour is far more economical and more efficient than Japanese; even the Korean peasantry are superior on their own ground to the Japanese immigrant farmer. The final results from all this activity are, of course, auxiliary to the industries and commerce of Japan, but, in the meanwhile, those who have benefited most materially from her peaceful penetration in this region are the Koreans, the Manchurian farmers, and the Chinese labourers, who come swarming in by thousands from Shantung.

You need not go far in any direction to find conclusive

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proof that, whether it be at farming, manual labour, trade or industrial work, the Chinese are vastly superior to the Japanese, just as they are to every other race; that is to say, they can produce better work and at a lower cost. Slowly but surely, in every place where the Chinese enjoy equal opportunities, the wealth of that place becomes theirs, as Hong Kong and the Malay States can testify. In Dalny to-day, there are no Japanese menservants; even the ricksha coolies are Chinese. At the docks of that flourishing Japanese colony, nearly all the manual labour, and a great deal of the office work, is done by Chinese. When I asked Dr. Uyeda, the Secretary of the South Manchurian Railway, why he employed a Chinese rather than a Japanese butler, his answer was simple, "Because as a servant the Chinaman is cheaper and better." Which accounts, does it not, for the small number of emigrants from Japan to Manchuria?

In Mongolia it is the same story. In speaking of Mongolia most people probably have the impression that the country still consists, as it did in the day of the Manchus, of rolling pastoral lands, sparsely inhabited by nomad Mongol tribes. But, as a matter of fact, a broad tide of Chinese settlers, mostly hardy farmers from Shantung, has been steadily flowing northwards throughout all that region ever since the Mongolian Colonisation Bureau of the Chinese Government began work in earnest in 1906, under Chu Chi Chien. (This official, it will be remembered, is he who gave to Peking its good roads and efficient police.) I recollect discussing this colonisation scheme with the Viceroy of Manchuria at Moukden in 1907; he and the Governor Tang Shao-yi were very enthusiastic on the subject, declaring that in ten years' time prosperous towns and villages would be springing up and well-tilled fields would replace the barren camping-grounds of the Mongols. And so it is; the peaceful invasion of Chinese settlers has been steadily advancing, at the rate of about four miles a year, making the wilderness to blossom as the rose; and the same process has been going on, only

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less methodically, in Eastern Siberia. There are, of course, large tracts of country still untouched by the plough, but it can only be a matter of brief time before the tide of China's surplus millions flows over them all. Nothing but Exclusion Acts, forcibly applied, can ever stem that tide; the province of Shantung alone, with its population of 600 to the square mile, could probably fill up the whole of Eastern Mongolia in the lifetime of one generation. Against these thrifty pioneers even the best of Japanese farmers cannot hope to compete, and they know it. With anything like equal opportunity, the Chinese will always outwork them and under-live them. Japan may obtain political and administrative control of these undeveloped regions; profiting by the demoralisation of Russia, she can establish there her strategic and economic position; but the Chinese will surely inherit the land. As Russia discovered before 1910 in the Amur and maritime provinces of Siberia, no protective legislation can hold behind land frontiers the resistless tide of their advance.

I believe that all these things have combined to lead the Japanese Government to modify its policy, not only in China, but in Manchuria and Mongolia, and that the idea of Eastern Asia as a wide field for Japanese emigration (which Marquis Komura proclaimed in the Diet ten years ago) has gradually come to be replaced by a policy of commercial and industrial expansion in those regions, which shall feed Japan's home industries in the same way as India feeds those of Great Britain. Such a policy, of course, does not solve—it merely defers—the problem of congestion on Japanese soil. It means that each year's growth of population must be absorbed into the nation's expanding industries, making Japan, like England, more and more dependent upon imported food supplies, more and more exposed, therefore, to the risks which such a condition entails. Looked at in this light, we perceive why Japanese Liberalism (as distinct from the Military Party) is doing all that it can to gain and retain the good-

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will of the Chinese, while at the same time losing no opportunity of extending its conquests by railway and bank, and fortifying its preferential rights against the claimants of the "open door." To commit any act of military aggression against China would be fatal, I think, to the fundamental object of Japan's present-day policy, which is, to secure raw materials for her factories on the most advantageous terms. The Foreign Minister, Viscount Uchida, put the matter very plainly when he said last year in the Diet, that "Japan is compelled to rely in a large measure upon the rich natural resources of China in order to assure her own economic existence." Her Liberal statesmen (men like Viscount Kato, Mr. Ozaki, and Baron Hayashi) believe that if China's goodwill and confidence can be secured, Japan can and should assist China to develop these resources, as she is doing in Manchuria and Korea, for the ultimate benefit of both countries and of international trade.

It is not to be denied that during the past five years many of the steps which the Japanese Government has taken or sanctioned with a view to establishing her "special rights and interests" in China, constitute in effect a violation of the principle of the "open door." Viscount Ishii's negotiations with Mr. Lansing, like every utterance of every statesman in Japan when you come to the point, made it perfectly plain that Japan will never willingly consent to being debarred from emigration to America and at the same time forbidden to seek expansion in Asia. To conform to the conventions of diplomacy she may base her claim to those "special interests" on geographical propinquity, but one cannot study her history for the past thirty years, or examine her actual situation, without realising that it is based on imperative economic necessity. Above the clamour of the politicians, above the war cries of the Military Party, the far-seeing statesmen of Japan hear the voice of the people, that asks for bread and will not be denied. There has never been any swerving or inconsistency in the national policy since

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Japan first went to war with China in 1894, and the mainsprings of that policy have been essentially economic. Realising the impossibility of expansion in the direction which they would have preferred—that is to say, on to the American continent—the rulers of Japan have concentrated every effort upon obtaining a firm foothold on the Asiatic mainland. And even though the path be fraught with danger, they must needs go forward, for they know that the nation's existence is at stake. Even before the war in Europe, when, in July 1910, she concluded her agreement with Russia, Japan had advanced, and Great Britain had admitted, her "rights and special interests" in Manchuria and Eastern Mongolia. The Government of the United States tacitly recognised those interests when it acquiesced in the Russo-Japanese veto on the construction of the railway from Chinchow to Aigun with American capital. Mr. Lansing's explanation of the phrase "special interests," as made before the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee in August 1919, leaves the matter much where it was. To "recognise that Japan, because of her geographical position, had a peculiar interest in China, but that it was not political in nature," was meaningless, for the simple reason that in China, where the foreigner enjoys extra-territorial rights, it is impossible to assert any kind of special interest that is not also in a sense political. Japan's latest reassertion of her special interests in Manchuria and Mongolia will be discussed hereafter. The point which I now desire to emphasise is, that this claim is no new thing, but part and parcel of a perfectly natural and consistent policy, for the furtherance of which the nation has fought two great wars, and for which, if needs be, it will fight again. For the alternative, as they see it, is extinction.

Setting aside the purely Japanese aspect of this problem, the question arises, what, as a matter of practical politics is the alternative to recognition of Japan's special interests in Manchuria and Mongolia, and to her development of the resources of this rich territory? That it cannot

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be satisfactorily developed by the Chinese Government, is evident; it is equally evident that, apart from its strategical value, this region is of vital importance to Japan as a new source of raw materials. The scientific development of this country, as I have shown, must be of immediate benefit to the Chinese population. There are, no doubt, political and sentimental reasons, based either on single-minded morality or enlightened self-interest, to justify objections to Japanese expansion in these regions, but the practical question remains, will the United States, or any other Power, assume a mandate to maintain China's shadowy sovereignty over her loosely-held dependencies? Let it not be forgotten that Mongolia repudiated that sovereignty in 1913 and has only recently announced its desire to return to the fold; also that, as far back as 1901, Germany notified the world at large that the geographical term "China" could not be held to include Manchuria. Sooner or later, whatever happens, Japanese expansion on the Asiatic mainland will have to reckon with the Slav; but in the meanwhile what can it profit the civilised world to oppose this expansion, so long as it takes the form of peaceful penetration in thinly-peopled regions?

Ten years ago I ventured to forecast the development of this question, as follows:

"For Canada and for Australia, as well as for America, the economic pressure of Japan involves problems of far-reaching importance, seriously affecting Imperial policies and the balance of power. A highly organised military nation, collectively amongst the most efficient on earth, demands more elbow-room and new markets; thus considered, the present course of Japanese policy clearly reflects the elementary truths of biological science. The Japanese are not a passive type of race, prepared to solve the problem of food supply by fatalist acceptance of famines, infanticide, and scourges of disease. They prefer, and are able, to expand at the expense of their weaker neighbours. If once we admit the inherent political and military inefficiency of China, the fate of

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Manchuria and Mongolia is sealed. Japan will not (indeed she cannot) consent to be excluded from those regions to gain which she resisted Russia's advance."

If this was true ten years ago, Japan's need of elbow-room and new markets is much greater to-day. If, as I have endeavoured to show, the maintenance of China's sovereign rights and independence can best be secured by harmonious co-operation between the United States, England, and Japan, it follows, I think, that this aspect of the situation must be generally recognised. For what is the alternative? To fight for the shadow of the "open door" in Manchuria, and meanwhile to allow China to go her self-determined way to irretrievable ruin? The "open door" became a shadow in Manchuria when Japan took over the South Manchurian Railway from Russia as the price of victory, and the real problem which awaits solution by the civilised world to-day is, how to preserve China from complete dissolution, to re-establish and guarantee the absolute independence of her eighteen provinces under their own re-organised Government? Without the loyal co-operation of Japan, the thing cannot be done; but there would seem to be good grounds for hoping that this co-operation will be forthcoming, unless an arbitrary disregard of the fundamental facts of the situation should compel her to fight for her very existence.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### JAPAN'S POLICY IN CHINA

In the previous chapter I have endeavoured to show, firstly, that the motive force behind Japan's imperative claims to expansion is severe economic pressure, due to increasing over-population of the Island Kingdom; secondly, that this pressure is compelled to seek relief on the Asiatic continent, because insistence on a free right of entry into America and Australia is impracticable; thirdly, because it is evident that, as labourers, colonists, and farmers, the Japanese cannot hope to compete with the Chinese in Manchuria and Mongolia, the Japanese Government's policy of expansion now aims chiefly at obtaining control of the latent resources of these regions, and developing them as economic protectorates, so to speak, for the supply of raw materials. I have also endeavoured to show that, if China is to be protected from internal disintegration, a common purpose of good will towards her must actuate the United States, Great Britain, and Japan; that this cannot possibly be achieved if Japan has reason to consider that her claims to expansion are being arbitrarily thwarted by the same Powers which deny her the rights of emigration to white men's countries; and that therefore it would seem to be good statesmanship to recognise Japan's "special interests" in Manchuria and Mongolia. Such recognition, of course, would have to form part of a general settlement of the Far Eastern question, the main purpose of which would be to reaffirm, and guarantee beyond all risk of further violation, the fundamental object of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, namely:



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"The preservation of the common interests of all Powers in China, by ensuring the independence and integrity of the Chinese Empire and the principle of equal opportunities for the commerce and industry of all nations in China."

As far back as 1913, in connection with the old Consortium's reorganisation "loan negotiations," the Russian and Japanese Governments filed their claims to respective "special rights and interests" in Manchuria and Mongolia. Russia, for the time being, has left the stage; but Japan, in forming the new Consortium initiated by the United States Government, has reasserted (though in a modified form) her separate claim. The Japanese base their claim in this matter upon strategical and also upon economic grounds. Discussing the matter with one of the Under-Secretaries of the Foreign Office at Tokyo, I was informed that "Japan's claim, prompted as it is by the special relations in which she stands with Manchuria and Mongolia, is only the demand for a reservation, whereby certain enterprises vital to her existence and self-defence could, if required by the force of circumstances, be excluded from the scope of the Consortium." Viscount Uchida, the Foreign Minister, and other statesmen whose views on the subject have been made public, are generally content to base their objections to international enterprises in these regions on the ground of their "territorial propinquity" to Japan. They also point out that the present dangerous position of affairs in Siberia, abandoned by the Allies, makes it more necessary than ever for Japan to protect her national interests. But, stripped of all diplomatic verbiage, the simple fact emerges that Japan won her "special interests" in Manchuria at the cost of a long and costly war with Russia, and that, had she not done this, these provinces would long since have been Russian. As far back as 1907, when she vetoed British and American railway concessions granted by the Chinese Government in Manchuria, she gave an unmistakable indication of

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the policy which she has since consistently pursued, so that the Consortium reservation is no new thing.

Inasmuch as the nature of Japan's "special rights and interests" has never been definitely submitted to, or recognised in detail by, the Governments concerned, and because, while claiming special rights and interests, Japan has always been at pains to assert that they involve no economic monopolies and will not violate the principle of the "open door," they should provide scope for negotiation and a basis for revision of the whole situation in the Far East. That revision should entail not only a settlement of the Shantung question, with full recognition of China's unimpaired sovereignty throughout the entire province, but the abolition of all "special interests" in China proper which infringe or diminish that sovereignty. Assuming that Japan is really prepared to act in concert with Great Britain and America, and in the best interests of China, recognition of her privileged position in Manchuria and Mongolia should be balanced by her consent to a new deal and a square deal all round. The civilised world might acquiesce with a clear conscience in Japanese economic expansion into the undeveloped and loosely-held dependencies north of the Great Wall, but if there be any truth in all our profession of noble ideals, any real sympathy for the misfortunes of the Chinese nation, the Powers must agree, once and for all, to call a halt to further exploitation of this defenceless people. For Mongolia is, so to speak, an empty house, and Manchuria a house with rooms to let; but China's house is her own, and its many mansions are crowded; there is no room in them for hungry strangers.

If one were justified in gauging the future development of the situation by the light of the Japanese Government's recent declarations of its policy towards China, such an agreement as I have outlined above would appear to be not only feasible, but to the obvious advantage of all concerned, since only by some such understanding can China's resources be peacefully and rapidly developed

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for the common benefit of the world's trade. Looking back over the past three years, we find a remarkable family likeness in all the pronouncements by Japan's Foreign Ministers in regard to China. At the close of 1916, the policy publicly announced by Count Terauchi and his Cabinet was founded on a self-denying resolution to allow China henceforward to manage her own affairs without interference; to co-operate with China for the preservation of peace in the Orient; and not to seek to acquire any further "rights and special interests" in China. Since then many similar declarations have been recorded. For example, Viscount Uchida, the present Foreign Minister, announced in January 1919, "in view of mischievous rumours that had been circulated," that Japan had no territorial ambitions in China, as elsewhere; neither did she contemplate any action which might militate against the development of the legitimate interest and welfare of the Chinese nation. Again, at last year's opening of the Diet, the same Minister announced that it was contrary to the desires of the Japanese Government that "civil strife should be protected in China for years. It was really in the hope of facilitating the reconciliation of the North and South that we have taken so much pains in the control of loans, as well as in the restrictions of the export of arms to China. In short, we are most anxious to see an early completion of the work of unification in China."

So far, so good. Japan's declared policy towards China is, on the face of it, calculated to facilitate the concerted action required to restore good government in that country. Unfortunately, however, it still remains true that Japan's foreign policy is not in the hands of her Foreign Minister, or, for that matter, in the hands of the Cabinet. And it is also incontrovertibly true that, during the past six years, while England was fighting for her national existence, the invisible Powers behind the Throne, which actually control Japanese policy, have done many things in China which are not only flagrantly

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opposed to the public declarations of the Government, but are in direct violation of the spirit and the letter of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Making all due allowance for Japan's economic difficulties, and for her natural desire to take every advantage of the opportunities created by the war to establish herself in a preferential position in China; making allowance also for the indisputable fact that the arbitrary demands which she forced upon China in May 1915 were chiefly inspired by the conviction that Germany would win the war—it still remains impossible to reconcile her actual and present proceedings in China with her public professions of good will toward that country and her avowed respect for the principle of the "open door."

Let us consider, in the first instance, the public utterances of Viscount Uchida, above quoted, and compare them with the actual facts of the situation. The Foreign Minister declares it to be the policy of his Government "to facilitate the reconciliation of the North and the South," and to "assist in the work of unification in China." But he knows—indeed, the whole world knows—that the chief cause of quarrel between the political faction which calls itself the South, and the party in power at Peking, lies in the secret agreements which the latter has been compelled or persuaded to make with the representatives of the Japanese General Staff, the irresponsible but real controllers of Japan's foreign policy. He knows that the Military Agreement of March 1918, in particular, has aroused something more than partisan hostility in China, that all the best elements in the country resent and fear the dominating influence which Japan has thereby acquired over the corrupt politicians of the "Northern" party. As to "the pains which Japan has taken in the control of loans and export of arms to China," there has undoubtedly been a certain slackening of activity of late on the part of Japanese official and semi-official money-lenders, which may possibly be attributed to the revival of the Consortium, but is more

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probably due to the fact that every reliable security has now been pledged. Some thirty secret loan agreements were made by Japanese agents at Peking and in the provinces during 1918, the security usually being some railway, mine or industrial concern, possession of which is calculated to promote Japanese control of raw materials at their source. The total amount of these loans exceeds 200,000,000 *yen*. That these equivocal activities represent a definite policy is clearly indicated by the rewards and decorations which the Japanese Government has bestowed upon officials of the Finance Department "for services rendered in connection with loans to China," and to military officers "upon the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese Military Agreement."

It is unnecessary to labour the point. It is undeniable that, next to the disorganisation of China, the most important factor in the Far Eastern problem lies in the hidden hand of the Military Party at Tokyo. As it was thirty years ago, so it is to-day—Japan's policy in foreign affairs is directed not by the Foreign Office, but by the War Office. The voice is the voice of Uchida, but the hand is the unseen hand of Yamagata. Therefore, in considering the possibility of a new deal and a square deal in the Far East, one is always confronted by the question: Is the power of the Military Party really waning (as every one in Japan assures you it is), and will it be replaced by real Cabinet government in time to allow of satisfactory co-operation between the great commercial nations? I have discussed this question with leading men of all parties in Japan, from the Prime Minister downwards—with politicians, business men, and journalists—and everywhere I find them expressing the same opinion, namely, that the liberal and conciliatory policy proclaimed in the Government's public utterances will surely triumph over the Imperialist and aggressive policy of the Military Party, and that before long representative government will replace the domination of the Satsuma-Choshiu Clans. Nevertheless, it



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remains true that Japan's policy in China is still dominated by the military staff, and this fact makes it impossible to regard the declarations of her Foreign Ministers as more than pious aspirations. One of the best books that has been written on this situation in the Orient since the war, Mr. Frederick Coleman's *Unveiling of the Far East*, shows that in 1916 Japanese statesmen spoke of the waning influence of the military party just as confidently as they do to-day, and professed the same faith in the triumph of a liberal policy of fair competition or friendly co-operation in China. But the fact remains that the aggressive and unjustifiable policy of the "twenty-one demands" of May 1915 is still in force, that the secret Sino-Japanese Military Agreement of March 1918 has aggravated the situation thereby created, and that neither public opinion as voiced in the Press, nor the responsible government of Japan, gives any indication of a determination to put an end to this anomalous state of affairs. Yet end it must, if there is to be any renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and any hope of peace in the Orient.

On March 1, 1920, I had an opportunity of discussing these matters with Viscount Kato, who was Foreign Minister at the time the famous "Twenty-One Demands" were formulated. He took occasion to observe that the fifth group of those demands (subsequently withdrawn) was never meant to be anything more than an expression of the Japanese Government's hopes and wishes. Without contesting this somewhat delicate question, or referring to the still more delicate point that President Yuan Shih-k'ai had been bound over to keep these hopes and wishes secret, I pointed out that, according to common report in Peking, the present secret Military Agreement confers on the Japanese military party, its heirs and assigns, rights and special interests very similar in effect to the "hopes" abandoned with Group V of this secret agreement. Viscount Kato, like every one else in Japan, professed ignorance; but, looking

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at the matter from the point of view required by the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, he was bound to confess that the agreement would either have to be terminated before long or its terms made public.

This so-called Military Agreement was, in effect, nothing more than a financial deal, by virtue of which Tuan Chi-jui and his friends kept themselves in power and funds, by the aid of Japanese loans. Two months after it was made, the Chinese Government, to allay the suspicions which it had aroused, published a statement to the effect that it was intended to provide for joint military action against German and Bolshevik movements in the Siberian borders. "The scheme," said this statement, "has no reference to any other matters, and will lapse with the conclusion of the war. The agreement will not actually become operative unless enemy influences actually penetrate Siberia. It is not a Treaty, but an understanding, which becomes null and void if there is no danger of enemy invasion. The only reason for non-publication of its terms is to prevent their coming to the knowledge of the enemy. The convention involves no loss of territorial sovereign rights and confers no privileges on Japan." An official statement was published by the Japanese Government on June 8 to the same effect.

But what are the facts to-day, when the war has been over for more than two years and the Allies have withdrawn from Siberia? It is evident that the avowed object of the agreement has ceased to exist and that there can be no further justification for concealing its terms, quite apart from the provisions that, by the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Agreement, Great Britain is entitled to know them. But according to Tang Shao-yi, and others who are in a position to know the facts, the Agreement will not lapse, because it was secretly renewed by exchange of letters in the spring of 1919. The 420 Japanese military officers attached to the Chinese forces in Chihli and Fengtien will not fold up their tents like the Arab—

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at least, not just yet. The Sino-Japanese Military Agreement, with all that it entails, will remain valid and binding upon China as long as the General Staff at Tokyo desires it.

Several sincerely liberal-minded public men in Japan (such as Mr. Ozaki of the Kenseikai party) assured me that all these sad, bad things are rapidly passing away, and that, even if the Government cannot yet control the unfortunate proceedings of the General Staff, there is every reason to hope and believe that the Military Party itself is beginning to realise the error of its ways. Its policy, they say, may be expected to conform in the near future to the public declarations of the Government. Is not General Tanaka, the Minister for War, a very reasonable man, and has not the Prime Minister proved the growing influences of Liberalism by stopping the sale of arms to China, and by substituting civilian for military authority in Korea and the Liaotung peninsula? If only the world will be patient, all will be well. It may be so, but, as I have said, the best men in Japan, men like Baron Hayashi and Baron Ishii, were saying precisely the same thing four years ago; and the sands are running out. I believe that the influence of the Chauvinists and the Jingoes is waning, but that the process may prove to be too slow to be of much practical benefit in the present critical stage of the Far Eastern question. There is, no doubt, much truth in the opinion, frequently expressed to me in conversation by bankers and other business men, that the process might be materially accelerated were there any indication of a definite "China policy" either in England or the United States.

Meanwhile, there are signs and to spare that the militarists are not without honour in their own country, aye, even among those who profess to deplore their irresponsible activities in China. One of the most significant of these straws on the political wind is the *Asian Review*, a journal of which the first number appeared with a great flourish of trumpets in February 1920. It

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is edited by Mr. Ryohei Uchida, the notorious *ronin* leader of the Black Dragon Society, and as a literary production calls for little notice. But its appearance on the scene at this juncture, with a published list of supporters which includes most of the leading men in the Government and the Press, cannot be ignored. For Mr. Ryohei Uchida and the Black Dragon Society have been too frequently employed by the military party as *agents provocateurs*, and have rendered too many valuable services in that capacity, to be lightly set aside. Now the attitude of the review is one of truculent chauvinism, of impartial hostility to Great Britain, the United States, or any other country which may attempt to thwart the Pan-Asian dream, with Japan as undisputed ruler of the East. Mr. Uchida's views on the subject of "Asia for the Asiatics," as set forth in an inaugural article, are childishly crude, but the article contains certain interesting admissions concerning the activities of the Black Dragon Society in China, which should prove embarrassing to some of his official supporters. Mr. Uchida confesses, for instance, that before the war with China, he and his friends, as an organised association, were the first to "extend aid to the Korean people, who had been struggling hard to throw off the shackles of Chinese interference." Again in 1911, "when a revolution broke out in China, we organised an association and gave assistance to the Chinese revolutionaries." The fact has long been notorious that the Black Dragon Society and others (with the tacit approval of the Japanese Government) have for years been fomenting rebellion in the South, whilst the Japanese Government itself has been lending money to the North on the security of valuable concessions. The Foreign Minister's recent assurance, that it is the earnest wish of his Government to "facilitate the reconciliation of the North and the South" gains nothing in weight from the publication of his own name and those of most of his colleagues as supporters of a publicist who boasts that he has done

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his best to prevent that reconciliation. The *Asian Review's* first list of supporters included not only the Premier, the Minister for War, and most of the Cabinet, but practically all the permanent officials of the Foreign Office, from Viscount Uchida downwards. Within the first few days after this journal's first appearance, I had occasion to discuss the matter with several of these officials. I talked, for instance, with Mr. Hanihara, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, and with Mr. Yoshizawa, Director of the Bureau of Political Affairs; with Viscount Kato, Marquis Komura, and Mr. Tokonami, Minister of Home Affairs, and, after them, with a number of bankers, business men, and Members of Parliament. Amongst these officials I found none who could see anything improper in the public association of their names with a propaganda which is frankly anti-British and provocative. All professed to regard Mr. Ryohei Uchida as a harmless fanatic, a *ronin* in political journalism, who must be allowed to let off steam, but whose influence was absolutely *nil*. They could not, or would not, see that if this man possesses influence enough to have his review god-fathered by the Premier and the Minister of War, and to include in his first number articles by Marquis Okuma, Baron Shibusawa, and Dr. Soyeda, public opinion abroad may be forgiven for not regarding him as an irresponsible person.

I have referred to this question of the *Asian Review* at some length because the association, however indirect, of any member of the Government with the fire-eating leader of the Black Dragons must remain open to serious misconstruction, so long as Japan's policy in China continues to express itself in secret agreements based on the lines of the "Twenty-One Demands." For it is beyond dispute that the policy represented by those "Demands" and by the subsequent "Military Agreements" is practically identical with the policy which Ryohei Uchida and his friends have consistently advocated. Take, for instance, the Black Dragon chief's

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" programme for the solution of the Chinese question," as published several years ago in a pamphlet issued for private circulation :

" Two points are most important in connection with the solution of this question : (1) to cause the sovereignty over South Manchuria and Eastern Mongolia to be entirely transferred to Japan, and (2) to hold the power of supervision and direction over China's finances.

" South Manchuria and Eastern Mongolia, under the sovereignty of the Imperial Government, should be made the base from which to control China proper. As to China proper, we should at first hold the real power of direction and make the control of its foreign policy and the management of its affairs (internal, financial, and military) our goal. To take all these matters into our hands at once would create anxiety in the world, but the acquisition of the sovereignty over the two regions mentioned and of the power of direction would enable us to extend our influence and finally to attain our goal.

" After the acquisition of the power to supervise China's finances, we must decrease her Army and armaments. In case of trouble arising from the disbandment of troops, Japan would be responsible for the dispatch of a force to suppress it. In that case, she would obtain the power of training the Chinese Army and of interfering with the internal administration through the control of revenue."

Now the reader who has followed me thus far will remember that the rulers of Japan consider that the country's economic situation justifies their claim to expansion into the thinly-peopled regions to the north of the Great Wall, and that this claim is moreover warranted by the fact that Japan drove Russia from these regions at great cost of blood and treasure. I have suggested that no satisfactory settlement of the Far Eastern question is possible without some recognition of this claim, which no Japanese Government would dare to abandon. But inasmuch as the preservation of China's independence and the strict maintenance of the

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"open door" are the only objects of British policy—to say nothing of the other nations concerned—it is evident that the Powers behind the Consortium must refuse to recognise Japan's claims in this direction so long as there is any possibility of Manchuria and Mongolia being used as a base for further aggression upon China proper. Therefore, so long as the activities of the Military Party continue to justify the suspicions which they have aroused since 1915, so long as the general tendency of those activities proceeds along the lines advocated by Mr. Ryohei Uchida and his fellow-Jingoes, it is useless for either the Intellectuals or the Liberals to proclaim their good intentions towards China and their good faith towards England. We must give these men credit for sense enough to know that Great Britain is not likely to renew the Alliance under conditions which would threaten the extinction of her trade with China. We must also believe that these men are sincere, when they say that the great bulk of public opinion in Japan deprecates the proceedings of the Military Party and would like to see China helped by the united action of the friendly Powers to become a strong nation and a rich market. But it remains for Japan to give assurances that the declared policy of the Government will henceforth be binding upon the Military Party, as well as upon its civil exponents.

Close examination of the arguments put forth during the last few years by the diplomatic spokesmen of Japan (particularly by Marquis Saionji and Marquis Ishii) shows that, stripped of all verbiage, they amount to claiming a privileged position not only in Manchuria, but in China, on grounds of territorial propinquity, community of race, etc. On these grounds, Burma, Siam, and Thibet might claim similar advantages with greater force. The truth of the matter, of course, is that Japan's national existence is going to depend more and more upon her being able to secure from China and her dependencies the supplies of steel, iron, and other raw materials which

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she needs for her industries. Like Great Britain, though in a lesser degree, she has to face the problem of feeding her surplus millions by the profits of those industries, under ever-increasing competition. Therefore, all her efforts since the war with Russia have been continually directed to making for herself in China such a position of economic advantage as shall protect her hereafter from that competition to the utmost extent possible. The activities of the Military Party at Peking have only been one means to that end; those of her diplomatic agents, financiers, and merchants have all contributed to the same. But all with one accord continue to pay lip service to the principle of the "open door" because, since the war, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance has again become a desirable asset and an insurance policy. From the Anglo-American point of view, therefore, there should be leverage and to spare in the renewal of that Alliance, and it should be possible thereby to induce Japan to abandon those policies and proceedings which since 1915 have violated it both in the spirit and the letter.

Most Japanese, when cornered in argument, will confess that they did those things because, in 1915 and 1916, it seemed to them that Germany was not going to be decisively beaten, and that they were therefore justified in pegging out their new claims on the assumption of a stalemate between the exhausted European Powers. Cynical, if you like, and yet natural enough from the Oriental point of view. But from the same point of view it is only natural for Great Britain to insist upon a return in the direction of the *status quo ante.*

Without attempting to suggest the scope and effect of such a new deal, I think it is evident that, to be of any real benefit to China, it should involve the complete abolition of all "spheres of influence," Shantung included; the unification of all railway concessions in China proper, under one Chinese Board, with the necessary foreign financial control; and the cancellation of all the vague claims, advisorships, and petty encroachments on

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China's sovereignty, which have grown out of leased territories and concessions and railway rights. It is not seemly that the Powers should continue solemnly to assure each other of their unswerving determination to uphold the sovereignty of China whilst every day witnesses the unprotesting acceptance of fresh encroachments upon that sovereignty. No nation is blameless in this matter; even the United States has its extra-territorialised post offices, which compete with, and at the present moment underbid, the Chinese Postal Service. But, in pursuance of the policy of the "Twenty-One Demands," Japan has arrogated to herself rights, powers, and special interests for which there can be no possible justification. It is not enough that at Peking her military and other agents swarm in such numbers as to convey the idea of a Protectorate; that her wireless service from the capital communicates directly with Japan, and that she has even introduced Imperial Japanese pillar-boxes and postmen in every district of the capital; all over China since 1915 her proceedings have been those of a creditor infringing on the rights of a defenceless debtor.

Of the Shantung question it is not necessary to say much. Japan does not need Kiaochao as a miniature naval base (the General Staff advised against it in 1915), and the Imperialists' attempt to have the place made into a colony under a Military Governor was defeated upon the advice of Baron Hayashi. It is therefore to be expected that in due course Japan will withdraw her troops from the Shantung railway and the Kiaochao district and restore Tsingtao to the Chinese authorities. But, except for the matter of Customs revenues and the preservation of China's much-injured "face," the restoration, as a Chinese writer puts it, will simply amount to handing back the shell after eating the oyster. Even if President Wilson at the Versailles Conference had not conferred upon Japan by treaty her rights of succession to Germany's property in China, and even if the Japanese Government now fulfils its solemn pledge not to deprive

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China of anything which she possessed before the war, nothing can alter the fact that the town and harbour of Tsingtao have been converted since 1915 into an entrenched and evidently permanent outpost for Japanese trade. And this has been done not only with complete disregard of most of the conditions under which Germany held the leased territory from the Chinese, but in violation of the principle of equal opportunity where other nations are concerned.

Their desire to make hay while the sun shone was natural enough, but the methods by which the Japanese have achieved their end at Kiaochao have not been of a nature to endear them either to the Chinese or to other nations. For instance, in laying out the new Japanese town which has replaced the German colony at Tsingtao, a place had to be set apart for the local Yoshiwara, the "red-light section," without which no Japanese settlement is ever complete. The site chosen was a large one, and on it several blocks of buildings have been erected surrounded by neat gardens, all in the best Japanese manner. Unfortunately, those who selected the spot overlooked the fact that it adjoins the residences and schools of the Presbyterian Mission. This is, no doubt, one of the cases which that prolific apologist, Mr. Kawakami, would include in his list of "unfortunate blunders"; and he might add that it took place five years ago. But there are other and much more recent cases. Early in 1920 there were several ex-German properties to be disposed of by public auction at Tsingtao, for some of which the agents of three or four well-known British firms had been instructed to bid. On a certain Tuesday the Japanese authorities gave notice that the auction would take place on the following Friday, but that only registered estate agents would be allowed to bid. As this class consisted entirely of Japanese, the results of the auction would have been a foregone conclusion had it taken place. But the Foreign Office in London spoke the word in season and Tokyo cancelled the arrangements.

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One meets with many honest gentlemen in Japan who inquire why it is that their countrymen have become so generally disliked abroad in recent years. Incidents of the kind above described suggest one answer to that question. They suggest also the reflection that Tokyo can, if it will, prevent many of these things, and that the establishment of a good understanding between the Powers must hereafter depend to a very great extent upon the class of agents that Japan employs in China and the orders upon which they proceed.

England, in particular, has reason to complain of her Allies' activities in China during the past five years. I need not dwell on the violent anti-British Press campaign which broke out and swept through Japan, with scarcely a protesting voice, in 1916, when Germany's star appeared to be in the ascendant. It was not what we had a right to expect from a nation that prides itself on chivalry, but the Japanese would wish that unfortunate episode to be forgotten; let bygones be bygones. Their feverish hay-making in China, however, and especially in the Yangtsze Valley, at the time when Great Britain was not in a position to protect her interests, could hardly help leaving a distinctly disagreeable impression. Their activities in the matter of loans to the provincial authorities, and of railway and mining concessions in the Yangtsze provinces, have all been conducted without the slightest regard for Great Britain's prior claims to a particular interest in the development of this region. They may say, no doubt, that Great Britain's claim to a sphere of interest had been allowed to lapse in 1900 and again in 1909, after having been successfully contested by the Germans; but this line of argument overlooks the moral obligations incumbent upon a loyal Ally. When, for example, in January 1915, the Japanese Government instructed its Minister at Peking to include under Group III of the "Twenty-One Demands" recognition of Japan's claims to priority of rights in the Hanyehping Coal and Iron Company, with an extensive mining

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monopoly attached thereto, it was not "playing the game." It was a direct attack upon the principle of equal industrial opportunity at a point where England was fully entitled to expect fair play. The Ally, whose claims we have recognised to veto all but Japanese railway concessions in Manchuria, and who now claims the reversion of Germany's exclusive privileges in Shantung, should have been the last to assert her determination to establish herself at the heart of the Yangtsze Valley by means of concessions privily obtained by loans to hungry Chinese officials. Japan now keeps a small garrison at Hankow, intended, no doubt, to emphasise the principle of the "open door." Her agents are also working continually, and by methods which will seldom bear inspection, to increase Japanese political influence at Shanghai. If Japan's urgent need is trade, if she must at all costs find and develop new markets, the same holds good of Great Britain. Japan has all the advantage of geographical propinquity; to seek further and unfair advantage at her Allies' expense is surely bad policy; and many fair-minded men in Japan recognise the fact.

A good many business men with whom I had occasion to discuss these matters, frankly admitted that so long as Mr. Obata continues to be Minister at Peking it may reasonably be assumed that Japanese policy in China will continue to be framed in the spirit of the "Twenty-One Demands," and distinguished, moreover, by an unpleasant combination of slimness and aggressiveness. From personal observation I can vouch for it that if the Japanese Government wishes to avoid increasingly cordial relations with China, they have got the right man in Mr. Minister Obata at Peking. Those who believe that the policy of friendliness and fair dealing is destined before long to triumph over the Military Party and its preference for ways that are dark, believe also that Mr. Obata will soon be translated. There have been rumours lately in Tokyo that Mr. Minister Ijuin is likely to resume his old post at Peking, and that important changes will

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be made at the Foreign Office. Should these changes occur, they will go far to justify fair hopes of a settlement of the Far Eastern question on a basis of good understanding and good will.

It is evident that the present position of affairs, especially as regards the Shantung question (not to speak of secret agreements), cannot continue indefinitely. Sooner or later there must be an International Conference of the Powers chiefly concerned for the settlement of these questions. In September 1916, the State Department at Washington let it be known that it would take up these and other questions "with all the world Powers actually or tacitly committed to the 'open door' policy." But experience of international affairs in China has generally proved that where the Powers concerned are numerous, conferences are unprofitable and unpractical, and that they lead chiefly to the exhibition of international jealousy, from which the mandarins issue discreetly triumphant. It would therefore seem most desirable that without further delay Great Britain should communicate fully and frankly, as the Treaty of Alliance prescribes, and make proposals to Japan for regularising the entire situation. But two conditions must be essential preliminaries to any general negotiation: first, that Japan should be willing to co-operate loyally in such measures as may be proposed for the financial reconstruction of China; second, that the Military Party in Japan should cease from carrying out an independent policy, which conflicts with the Japanese Government's public assurances and undertakings.

Many competent observers of Oriental affairs consider that this second condition is not likely to be attained until Marshal Prince Yamagata shall have passed from the scene. Time will show. Personally, I believe that the moment is opportune for this vital change, and that the strength of Liberalism in Japan should be sufficient to achieve it, if convinced of the sympathy and confidence of public opinion in Great Britain and the United States.

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

A JUNK ON THE WHANGPOO.

*Author's Photo*]

BOAT TRAFFIC IN THE SOOCHOW CREEK, SHANGHAI.

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Premier Hara and the Seiyukai Party behind him would, I believe, welcome an Anglo-American-Japanese *entente* and a common reconstructive policy in China—indeed, they have publicly advocated it. For they, like ourselves, have one principal object in view, which is trade, and ever more trade, in China; and the events of the last few years have convinced many of them that the Military Party's methods are not calculated to advance that object. And even those who hold that a continuance of chaos in China would be profitable to Japan, are beginning to realise that such profit would be very dearly purchased at the price of national isolation.

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# CHAPTER IX

## THE JAPAN OF TO-DAY

In China, despite the parlous state of politics and the fictitious clamour of the students, one feels, as of old, that the established order, the structural life of the people, rests upon solid foundations of ancient and venerable tradition. Perils of change there are, of course, actions and reactions; but most of them are external, imposed by the invading alien, and therefore of their nature, impermanent. They are but wind-driven breakers, roaring on the rocks: beyond them, "unsailed by ship of yours, stretch to the blue horizon the silent spaces of the sea," the tranquil, brooding soul of a nation whose philosophy has stood the test of ages. So far as the mind of the Chinese people is concerned, our five years of devastating war might have been fought on another planet: its causes and results concern them no more than the rumble of a distant drum.

In Japan (revisited for the first time after ten years) I found myself wondering, as of old, at that quality in the average European resident which "cannot see the wood because of the trees." Just as the student clamour in China tends to confuse the historical sense and political perspective of the Treaty Port inhabitants, so in Japan, observers on the spot seem to be so impressed by the growth of political ferment and labour unrest, that they are liable to lose sight of the inherent vitality and cohesive value of the family system, on which the whole structure of Japan's society is based. A great strain is being brought to bear upon Japan's social structure by reason of her rapid transition into industrialism, of her newly-acquired wealth, and the effect of Western political ideas upon the



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masses since the war. Of this there is no doubt; but those who judge by the more uncivil and unruly elements of Japanese life with which, alas, one meets at the sea ports, and come thus to darkly pessimistic conclusions, are inclined to overlook the protective force of the family system. It constitutes, beyond all doubt, the strongest moral and political force in Japan; so deep in the past lie its roots, so strong are its inherited impulses of obedience and loyalty, that I cannot bring myself to believe that Western civilisation will ever dominate or destroy it. Beyond the voices of the politicians and the turmoil of the Press, I see, with the eye of faith, "these that dig and weave, that plant and build; men whose deeds are good, though their words may be few; men whose lives are worthy of honour, be they never so humble," and I remember gratefully that there are as yet only about two million Japanese in factories, while more than half the population are living and working on the land.

Nevertheless, there is a sense of increasing tension, of contagious unrest, in Japan, which has no counterpart in China, and which is giving food for anxious thought to the nation's leaders. It is essentially a town-bred disease, but it is serious for all that, now that Tokyo has grown to be a city of three million inhabitants, and popular education and railways have brought the newspapers into the country districts. It is an unrest both social and political, and its origin may be ascribed in large measure to the war, which, as I have shown, has increased the cost of living for the masses, while it has brought enormous fortunes to a small class of privileged traders and profiteers.

Long ago, Lafcadio Hearn, in *Japan: An Interpretation*, predicted that the country of his adoption would incur its greatest perils if, as he feared, spiritual decay should follow in the wake of sordid commercialism. He, who sincerely admired the Japanese, who loved the dignity and wisdom of the "Way of the Gods," described the effect of the West's modern materialism upon the ancient virtues of loyalty and courage and simple faith; and



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many of Japan's wisest and best leaders have realised this danger, and have striven, as far as possible, gradually to adapt the material and political devices of the West to the existing social structure, to assimilate and utilise our many inventions without loss of national individuality and virtue. From the outset of Japan's relations with the outside world it has been the fixed policy of her older statesmen, beginning with Ito and Inouye, to build the new edifice of State upon the old foundations. Their determination to permit no violent break with the past undoubtedly saved the nation from many perils of violent factions. To cite one instance only, it has enabled the people to study the practical machinery of representative government, even though the Diet is a voice without authority and all real power is still vested in the hands of the old ruling class; thus, by process of education, the masses of the people are gradually being fitted to take their part in the expression of public opinion.

The effects of the war have undoubtedly disturbed the calculations of Japan's rulers in more than one direction. They have produced a wave of restlessness, indiscipline, and incivility amongst the town-bred labouring classes. Indeed, the sudden ferment of new ideas has manifested itself throughout all classes of society. When a professor of the Tokyo Imperial University is dismissed for translating Prince Kropotkin's *Essays on the Blessedness of Anarchy*, and when, within a comparatively short space of time, four young ladies of good family elope with their chauffeurs; when thousands of women meet in a kimono'd Convention at Osaka to discuss their rights—there is evidently something to account for the pessimism of Japanese Conservatives, when they declare that the family system is in danger and that the nation will perish with it. In the same spirit you may hear elderly gentlemen in London Clubs predicting the immediate end of the British Empire because, for a little while, the deep-rooted common-sense of the English working-man has been misled by the plausible clap-trap of our parlour Bolsheviks.

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In the domain of politics in Japan it is unsafe to attach too much importance to the currents of thought which prevail at any particular moment, however deep they may appear to be. For your Japanese, like the Athenians of old, is ever avid of new things, ever ready to follow after strange gods; his intellectual creed is largely a matter of fashion. Therefore it would seem unwise to exaggerate, as many do, the significance of the tide of democratic opinions which flowed with such force immediately after the defeat of Germany. It is still strong enough to make many competent observers believe in the impending triumph of genuine Liberalism over the Military Party, and it certainly accounts for much of the fervour of public opinion on the subject of universal suffrage. It is something, of course, that the word "democracy" is no longer *tabu* to the platform and Press; that the prestige of Liberalism has been increased, and that of the Prussianised bureaucracy correspondingly diminished, since the collapse of German militarism. But of late there have been signs of reaction, signs that the vogue of Liberal and Democratic ideas is on the wane. Much of its first strength was derived from popular acceptance of the world's new gospel of Democracy, as proclaimed by President Wilson, but its ardour has been unmistakably dampened by gradual perception of the truth that the world is not going to be saved by fine phrases. If the Military Party in Japan—stronghold of the reactionaries—can now take new heart of grace, the fact is largely due to President Wilson's insistence on racial discrimination at the Paris Conference and to the American Senate's refusal to subscribe to the League of Nations.

Without under-rating the strength of Liberalism in Japan, I believe that it is not likely to achieve a real triumph over the Military Party unless some of the elements which support the latter are convinced of the danger of national isolation. Surely it is significant of the real state of affairs, of the entrenched strength of the bureaucracy, when a progressive leader, such as Yukio

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Ozaki, declines to organise and lead a Labour Party, and advises Labour that for the present it should endeavour to secure better education as a step towards exercising greater influence. Rice riots and labour strikes have their significance, of course, but one can hardly believe in the "will to power" of Liberalism and democracy in Japan, until there is evidence of a determined national movement to make the Diet a sovereign assembly, not only representative of the people, but able to give effect to its resolutions. Of this, although ricksha coolies discuss "de-mo-kra-sie" at street corners, there is as yet no sign, even in the high places of Liberalism. Even supposing that the actual rulers of the country—the aristocratic military and bureaucratic influences of the leading Clans—agree to please Demos by not opposing universal suffrage, what difference can it make whether there be two, or fifteen, million voters, so long as their elected House wields no power except a very limited power of obstruction, so long as the Government remains at the mercy of the military and naval General Staff?

In discussing such questions with politicians of all parties in Japan, one gets a curious impression of conflicting instincts—of a desire, on the one hand, to see Japan take her place amongst the politically progressive nations, and, on the other hand, of a strange reluctance to discuss the mysterious power of the Military Party. When, for instance, I asked Baron Hayashi to explain why neither the Kenseikai nor the Independent Party in the Diet have raised the vital question of the secret Military Agreement with China, the only explanation he could give was that the Japanese people "are very proud of their Army." Yet the next man you talk to will tell you that the prestige of the military class has now so greatly diminished that no young woman of good family will marry an officer if she can possibly avoid it. Most Japanese statesmen are quite prepared to recognise the justice of the contention that, if the renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance is to produce any satisfactory result, England must feel secure that the

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high contracting party in Japan is not only willing, but able, to fulfil its share of the pact. But, as matters stand, this is not the case. In foreign affairs, such as the direction of policy in China, the hidden hand of the General Staff undoubtedly dominates the Cabinet.

How, you may ask, is this possible? By an Imperial Ordinance of December 19, 1908, it was ordained that the Minister of War must be either a General or a Lieutenant-General, that is to say, one of a total of seventy-seven officers on the active list. Similarly, by an ordinance of March 31, 1916, it was laid down that the Minister of Marine must be one of a list of forty-five Admirals and Vice-Admirals on the active list. These Ministers dominate the Cabinet whenever (as in the case of China) they attend with specific instructions from the General Staff and from Prince Yamagata behind it. For the resignation of the War Minister, if it took place, would only mean the appointment of another officer from the specified list, acting under the same old orders. To take a concrete case. If the Hara Cabinet were categorically to decline to accept General Tanaka's views on the China question, and to insist on the cancellation of the Military Agreements at Peking, the General's resignation would mean the dissolution of the Government, for without the consent of the Army and Navy, a Cabinet cannot exist. The present condition of affairs differs but little in reality from that which was attained at the Restoration by a transference of power from the old feudal Lords to the ruling Clans of Satsuma and Choshiu, with Mikado-worship as a rallying-point for the people. A demand for popular rights followed naturally from the abolition of the old feudal system, but the Constitution which the Elder Statesmen provided was what the Japanese call "a bone without marrow." Its Diet was never intended to control the Government, and until the Constitution is altered, it never can. Now every member of the Diet, every writer of the Japanese Press, knows this perfectly well. All of them will discourse most earnestly about universal

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suffrage, about a conciliatory policy in China, about the renewal of the Alliance, labour reforms, and what-not, but one and all carefully avoid reference to the only question that really matters. When the Kenseikai or the Press begin to move in earnest for the revocation of the Imperial Ordinances, to which I have referred above, when the Government can give the portfolio of the War Ministry to a civilian, it will be time enough to regard Liberalism in Japan as a completely effective factor in the situation. But not before.

There is much food for thought in the fact that even the leading Intellectuals, men who profess ultra-democratic opinions, and those young sprigs of nobility who recently started a movement for the abolition of hereditary peerages, one and all fight shy of any serious discussion of the Military Party question. And in the end it is difficult to avoid the conclusion expressed by the cynical Mr. Pooley, that nearly every one who is any one in official Japan, is closely bound by ties of some sort—marriage, feudal patronage, or Clan loyalty—to one or other of the two great Clans, which since 1873 have controlled not only the Army and the Navy, but nearly every department of the public service. And when one remembers that from the very first, after their usurpation of the government, these fighting Clans have been steadily bent on an aggressive military policy—particularly directed against China—one begins to realise why it is so difficult to elicit any serious criticism of that policy. Every one professes to deplore it; every one will tell you that the influences behind are steadily waning; but no public man ever dares to attack it openly. It is at first difficult to reconcile this condition of affairs with other such signs of the times as the younger generation's excursions into Socialism, or the movement in favour of Labour Unions; but the explanation lies, of course, in the fact that, in the Orient, society is an aggregation of families, and the Clan system therefore an integral part of the national life.

In regard to such questions as universal suffrage and

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labour's right to form unions, I found much more evidence of genuine interest in the Press and amongst the people of Tokyo, than in the ranks of the politicians. I was present in the Strangers' Gallery of the Diet on the last day of the Suffrage Bill debate, when the House was dramatically dissolved, and I was impressed by the orderly and decorous behaviour of the Chamber. There were interruptions, of course, but the proceedings as a whole were extremely dignified—rather disappointing, in fact, as the vast number of policemen in the adjoining streets and the predictions of radical enthusiasts had seemed to justify the prospect of wigs on the green. The number of youthful members was comparatively small and the general appearance of the House of Representatives very different to that of Young China's Parliament. And I came away from the debate with much the same sense of unreality that one feels nowadays in our own House of Commons when the party voting has been pre-ordained, and neither the wit nor wisdom of the greatest of orators can change one jot of it. One felt that neither the supporters nor the opponents of universal suffrage could really be in earnest, as they all knew that an increase of the electorate would merely confer on a larger number of people the right to elect members of a House which has little or nothing to do with the actual government of the country. There are honest men and able men in the Tokyo Diet, but, like politicians all the world over, they have no ambition for the martyr's crown, and are generally prepared to take things (including their salaries) as they come.

In the same way, one is surprised at the average business man's comparative indifference to the labour problems which, sooner or later, employers in Japan will have to face like the rest of the world. On all sides you will hear complaints of the workers' newly-developed habits of laziness, of their exorbitant demands and senseless strikes, and Japanese employers are wont to lay particular stress upon the modern youth's lack of discipline

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and good manners, as new and unpleasant signs of the change in times. But you hear comparatively little of the probable effect upon Japanese labour of those dynamic ideas which are changing the whole structure of Industrialism in the West. Japanese capitalists—and especially those whose new fortunes have been made during the war—appear to devote remarkably little attention to labour unrest in their own country. At a Tokyo meeting of "big business" men early in 1920, mostly connected with shipping, a proposal to inaugurate a modest scheme of profit-sharing was almost unanimously voted down as quixotic foolishness. In coming from China to Japan I had fully expected to find widespread symptoms of unrest among the workers, and a corresponding uneasiness amongst employers; one could hardly fail to get some such impression from a study of the Treaty Ports' Press. But a closer study of the subject on the spot led me to the conclusion that the observers who create this impression (like those who have written of the student movement in China) attach an exaggerated importance to surface phenomena, whereas the employer of labour relies upon the fact that the national virtue of loyalty, in any great crisis, still possesses as strong a hold upon the masses of industrial workers as it does upon the Army. He knows, or thinks he knows, that so long as the family system remains the foundation of Japan's social structure, the gospel of Karl Marx will make no headway.

Needless to say, there are some big businesses, like the Mitsu-bishi Company, which are looking ahead, introducing real reforms, and improving the conditions of life for their workers; but, broadly speaking, there is very little evidence to be found in Japan of a general desire that the country should subscribe to the findings of any international Labour Conference. On the contrary, there is evidence of a very definite desire to let things be, to allow Japanese industry to enjoy the competitive advantage of free trade in human material, unfettered by any restrictions as to child labour, hours of work, or a minimum wage.

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THE RICE HARVEST, JAPAN.

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PRIMITIVE TRANSPORT IN JAPAN.

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It is true that many people on the spot hold a different opinion, and point to the increasing number of strikes, and the movement in favour of labour unions, as proof that Japanese labour is beginning to find itself. There are one or two "big business" Japanese who believe that industrial conditions must be radically changed if Japan is to hold her own in competition with Western nations. It may be so; but against these views two solid facts stand out: (1) That there are 25,000 factories in Japan employing over two million hands, and that until now the Government has gently but firmly declined to allow them the organisation of Labour Unions; (2) that there is as yet no organised Labour Party in the country, nor any prominent politician who is anxious to form or to lead one. There is not even an organised Socialist movement in Japan. Mr. Ozaki is probably right when he advises the working classes to get themselves a better education; but he has omitted to tell them how they are to get it.

While there is yet no sign of any effective organisation on the part of labour, it is also undoubtedly true that industrialism has produced, and is producing, a type of working man very different to those of old Japan. In him Hearn's prediction is verified: sordid commercialism has led to spiritual decay. Gone, as far as the public is concerned, are the old restraints of the Samurai tradition, the old virtues of courtesy and dignity and self-control. The working classes of Tokyo and other swarming hives of toilers (though they may still bear favourable comparison as regards manners with those of many Western countries) have become distinctly rude, quarrelsome, and lazy as compared with their forefathers. Some of these unpleasant characteristics may possibly be transient, attributable to the swollen head which comes from a rapidly swollen purse, but of the increasing rudeness of the man in the street—as distinct from the man in the field—there can be no doubt. It impresses itself most forcibly upon the tourists of the beaten track in Japan and upon the dwellers at the Treaty Ports, for the

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sad but true reason that the very worst classes of Japanese are those who have come into close contact with foreigners.

No one who revisits Japan to-day after some years of absence can fail to be struck by the fact that the relations between foreigners and natives are distinctly more strained than they used to be. The ill-feeling on both sides is widespread and unmistakable. Making every allowance for trade rivalry and the somewhat aggressive quality of self-assertion which the lower classes of Japanese have developed since the war with Russia, the prevalence of this unconcealed hostility, in a community which has everything to gain from friendly relations, is significant. When one remembers that at the time of the Russo-Japanese War the sympathies of Englishmen and Americans were all on the side of the Japanese, it is a little difficult to account for so complete a revulsion of feeling. There are, of course, faults on both sides. The Japanese, acutely sensitive in their *amour propre* since Japan became one of the "Big Five," resent the European residents' assumption of superiority, and this feeling has been distinctly aggravated by the "racial equality" discussion at Versailles. There is also no denying that many European presidents—especially among the old-timers—are unable to recognise the fact that the Japanese now consider themselves, with some show of justice, to have "grown up" as a nation; many of them habitually display a lack of courtesy and consideration for Japanese feelings which would inspire resentment in a worm. I have known an Englishwoman to get into a first-class railway carriage, where there were half a dozen well-dressed Japanese, and remark in a loud voice on "the repulsive habits of these creatures." (It is true that many Japanese travellers take their boots off and that they are somewhat lavish with orange peel, but then this happens to be their country.) In the same way, I have heard an American traveller on board a Japanese ship crossing the Pacific hold forth for the benefit of a smoke-room audience, including many Japanese, on the somewhat delicate topic

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of the position of woman in Japan. The increasingly strained relations between the Japanese and foreign residents in Japan are also attributable in some measure to the fact that, within the last few years, the prestige of the white races has been considerably lowered by the arrival in the Far East of certain types of Europeans and Americans heretofore happily unknown in these parts: of barbarous Bolsheviks, gorged with blood-stained loot, of evil women and camp followers that are the flotsam and jetsam from Siberia. And from America there has come since the war a class of business man new to the East, hustling bagmen and touts of the baser kind (generally of German-Jew extraction), who have created a deplorable impression, both on the Japanese and the Chinese.

One of the oldest residents of Yokohama attributed the increasing dislike of the Japanese shown by foreigners to remembrance of several things that have happened since 1914, which most Anglo-Saxons in the country find it difficult to forgive or forget. First, he said Englishmen felt deeply, and still resent bitterly, the concerted attack made by the Japanese Press upon Great Britain in 1916. Then there is always the feeling of sympathy for China, as the under-dog, and dislike of the policy of the aggressor, which chose the moment when all the world was at war to bully and despoil its helpless neighbour. Then there was the fact that, while Japan took credit to herself for joining the Allies, not only was she never really in the war, but that she had made lucrative opportunities of her Allies' necessities, and developed her trade in shipping as fast as possible at their expense. Finally, there were the old complaints, if anything more acute than before, of the Japanese trader's lack of commercial morality, of his violation of trade-marks, of contracts unfulfilled, and of goods not up to sample. If ever there was a time in the history of Japan when patriotism and foresight should have endeavoured to establish a good reputation for Japanese goods abroad, it was during the

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unparalleled opportunity created for her by the war; yet it remains an astonishing paradox that a nation which has proved itself capable of so much self-sacrificing devotion in other ways, should still be unable to practise ordinary honesty in commerce, though most of its leaders realise that the country's future must largely depend upon it.

The increasing dislike shown by most Europeans for the Japanese is by no means confined to Japan. From Peking to Penang, you will find indisputable evidence of it, afloat and ashore. Recognising and endeavouring to explain it, Baron Ishii stated in America that the seeds of this ill-will have been insidiously planted by German propagandists. Marquis Okuma, writing in the *Asian Review*, is inclined to ascribe it chiefly to jealousy of Japan's marvellous progress in warfare and industry, but he also thinks it possible that his countrymen may have waxed "selfish and conceited" as the result of their successes. Marquis Saionji, on his return to Tokyo in September 1919, deplored the fact that "Japan had become a general object of distrust and misunderstanding; a fact not only deeply injurious to Japan, but very unfortunate for foreign nations, whose policy in the Far East is influenced thereby. It was the duty of the nation to inspire a spirit of confidence and good-will among its friends abroad."

I have selected these three utterances by leading statesmen to show that public opinion in Japan is seriously concerned at the world's lack of confidence and good-will; deeply conscious also of the fact that the antipathies which have been aroused are something wider and deeper than the local animosities of Treaty Port traders. Everywhere amongst educated people in Japan to-day, there is evidence of the whole country's very real fear of moral isolation. On the day before my departure from Tokyo in March 1920, I lunched with Mr. Inouye, President of the Bank of Japan, to meet a small party of bankers and business men. They were all men of wide experience at home and abroad, captains of industry, intimately

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acquainted with the State-controlled machinery of Japanese commerce and finance, and one and all were evidently much concerned at their country's peril of isolation and most anxious to see it averted by a renewal of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. They recognised the supreme importance of establishing friendly relations, as a basis of satisfactory trade with China, and they realised also the dangers which threaten Japan's imperfectly developed industrial efficiency in the competition of more highly organised countries. The frankly expressed opinions of these men, representing the best brains of the country, seem to me to justify the conclusion that "big business" in Japan is quite prepared to support a renewal of the Alliance under conditions which will guarantee fair treatment of China in the first place, and, in the second place, absolute reciprocity in matters such as trademarks and coast trade facilities, wherein British and American merchants have hitherto suffered great disadvantage.

I refer to this particular conversation because it was typical of many, which produced a cumulative impression that the keynote of Japanese policy in the immediate future is likely to be national security at all costs. It is dangerous to dogmatise in such matters, but it appears to me that, politics apart, there is a new and very influential school of thought in Japan which has realised that the times are critical, that the nation stands literally at the parting of the ways, and that continuance in the path of unjustifiable aggression in China may well lead to disaster. The men who hold these views feel also that, before Japan can deal on fair and equal terms with Great Britain or France or the United States, she must find a way to put an end to the autocratic power of the Military Party and to make the nation's elected representatives responsible for its foreign policy. The crucial question of the whole Far Eastern problem remains therefore to-day where it was five years ago: Are the Japanese Progressives in earnest, and if so, how long will it take them to achieve

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this fundamental change? Opinion on this question is so hopelessly divided amongst the Japanese themselves, that the stranger within their gates may be excused from attempting to answer it.

There is no doubt that the alternative, as prescribed by stalwart Imperialists of the Black Dragon school, contains much that is attractive to the elemental Jingo which lurks in most human beings. A very alluring thing is the great Pan-Asian programme of the Militarists: an Empire of the East, greater than that of ancient Rome or modern England, over which the flag of the Rising Sun shall float in majesty unchallenged. It is Mouravieff's dream in a new guise; and yet not new, for the fighting Clans of Satsuma and Choshiu have long pursued the vision of Japan as overlord of Asia. The writings of one Yoshida Shoin, a leader of the Choshiu Clan, who died in 1859, proved clearly that the Military Party of that date had their plans all laid for the gradual annexation of Formosa, Korea, Saghalien, Manchuria, and Eastern Siberia. These plans were then deferred, but by no means abandoned, because the Clan leaders of that day had sense enough to perceive the wisdom of the advice which Ito gave them, namely, that Japan should set herself to acquire the appliances and sciences of the West before attempting a policy of aggression. The Military Party of to-day can point with justifiable pride to the record of their achievements during the sixty years that have passed since Ito gave them that advice; they can also remind their countrymen that, as the result of two successful wars, a substantial portion of their programme has already been accomplished. On these grounds they can appeal to the racial pride and martial spirit of the Japanese people. Were it possible of immediate attainment, the dream of a great Japanese Empire of the East would certainly allure not only the bureaucracy, but the masses of the people, to this great adventure. But just as in 1895, when the prudent wisdom of the Elder Statesmen realised that it was impossible for Japan to cling to her fruits of victory when

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threatened by the coalition of Russia, France, and Germany, so to-day the same wisdom appears to have perceived that the time has come to call a halt to the aggressive policy of the Clansmen in China. They certainly fear that persistence in this course may lead to a very dangerous position of isolation, and they also seem to realise that, as in 1860, the nation needs to set its house in order and to take careful stock of its position before embarking on any perilous enterprise. The immediate future, the adjustment of the present intolerable condition of affairs at Peking, lies on the knees of the gods. The Japanese Government's formidable naval programme is a disturbing feature of the situation. Nevertheless, considering it in the light of all the information available, I venture to believe that before long Japan will see fit to abandon the policy of military aggression and will concentrate all her efforts upon obtaining economic ascendancy in China. The consolidation of national security being the first aim of her statesmen, an alliance with Great Britain, the leading naval Power, is evidently essential for the fulfilment of that purpose. If these views are well founded, the Military Party, which mocked at the Alliance in 1916, will be obliged to perform a graceful *volteface*, and in so doing abandon, for the present at all events, its secret claim to rule the rulers of Peking. But the Pan-Asian dreamers will bide their time for all that, and the dream itself will never die.

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## CHAPTER X

### THE INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT IN KOREA

It is a curious and significant fact, indicative of the complexity of the problems which await the League of Nations, that the United States should have come to be recognised as the spiritual home of the new gospel of "self-determination," and therefore in a large measure responsible for the birth and growth of the Independence Movement in Korea. For, as an American writer of wide experience in world affairs has recently observed,[1] the whole history of the United States has been that of a nation of "imperialists, expansionists, unionists, enactors of the doctrine that a small State in a strategically vital relation to a larger State must accommodate its freedom to the security of its larger neighbour. In words and in deeds, the United States have denied that a small nation has a right to independence where such a right infringes the higher right of a vastly larger nation to health and tranquillity behind secure frontiers. Cuba, Porto Rico, Haiti, San Domingo, the whole Caribbean, both flanks of the Panama Canal, the Pacific—they all tell the same story." And again he observes: "The right of the few to liberty is not so high a right as the right of the many to live. Did not Lincoln, with his hand firmly upon the sword-hilt, say to the Confederate States: 'You have not a right to self-determination that imperils the peace and well-being of the American continent?'"

In other words, self-determination, like the principle of the innate equality of all men, depends for its application upon time and place, and, at the long last, upon

[1] Edward Price Bell in *The Times*, December 9, 1920.



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force. Contrasted with the activities of those of her citizens who believe that the Great War has brought us within sight of the Promised Land and the Brotherhood of Man, the attitude of the United States Government towards Korea's aspirations to independence affords a striking object-lesson, one of the kind which leads the logically-minded Latin and the astute Oriental to impute hypocrisy to the Anglo-Saxon. For these races lack the idealist quality of mind which fails or refuses to perceive the wide gulf which lies between benevolent theories and hard practice.

There is no disguising the plain truth that the recent agitation in favour of self-determination for Korea owed much of its inspiration originally to the influence and teaching of American missionaries in the Hermit Kingdom, and finally to President Wilson's momentous declaration that the League of Nations had appeared upon the scene with a Heaven-sent mission, "to prevent the domination of small nations by big ones." What Mr. Thomas W. Lamont has said of the political influence exercised by American missionaries in China [1] is even more conspicuously true of their work in Korea: they and their "Intellectual" pupils have undoubtedly done, and are doing, their best to "develop Korea from a people into a nation." Another well-known American writer,[2] who has lately made a careful study of the actual position of affairs in Korea, deplores the political activities for which so many American and Canadian missionaries have been conspicuous since the establishment of Japan's "Protectorate" in 1908. He reminds them that the American people openly sympathised with the Japanese cause in their Russian war, and that President Roosevelt approved, and formally recognised, the annexation of Korea by Japan; and this being so, he urges them to render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to conduct their religious teachings with proper respect

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 127.
[2] Charles H. Sherrill, in *Scribner's Magazine* for March 1920.



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for lawfully constituted authority. "There are too many of our missionaries," he observes, "who have lived so long in Korea that they think they own the country, and they can countenance no changes therein, even improvements. In this connection it is discouraging to note that in that flourishing missionary field, with hundreds of missionaries and over 300,000 Korean converts, Christianity seems to have left its converts about as ignorant and filthy as before their conversion, and nothing like so advanced in civilisation and decency of life as the near-by Buddhists and Shintoists of Japan."

Mr. Sherrill is an uncompromising realist, with the courage not only of his convictions, but of his conversions. Touching the question of "foreigners unthinkingly abusing a nation's hospitality by acts or teachings subversive of its authority," he confesses to having believed, before visiting the Far East, that democracy was the best form of government for all peoples." A study on the spot "of the contrast between the excellently functioning Imperial Government of Japan on the one hand, and, on the other, the disheartening venality of many officials of the Chinese Republic, *plus* the situation in Siberia made too free for democracy," has re-adjusted his point of view.

Now, setting aside the question of the responsibility for the agitation in favour of Korean independence, let us turn to consideration of its actual results in Korea and abroad. Mr. F. A. McKenzie, an English writer who has always sympathised deeply with Korea in her defencelessness, and pleaded her cause against aggression, has recently published an account of the events which followed upon the Declaration of Independence, signed and promulgated by thirty-three Korean patriots in March 1919. His book, *Korea's Fight for Freedom*, confirms and amplifies the indictment which he brought against the Japanese Government in an earlier work (1908). The righteous indignation which he felt on the

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subject of Korea's wrongs in the days of the Protectorate, has since been intensified by reason of the sufferings and humiliations which the Koreans have been compelled to endure since the annexation of their country in 1910. Mr. McKenzie, having been an eye-witness of those sufferings and humiliations, now appeals to the Christian Churches, and to the statesmen of the United States, Canada, and Great Britain, to demonstrate their practical sympathy and support on behalf of a sorely-oppressed people. His indictment of the Japanese Government's harsh rule and policy of savage repression, supported by the detailed evidence of a cloud of witnesses, is not pleasant reading. It is a record of grievous tyranny, of wholesale arrests of political offenders and suspects, of inhuman treatment of thousands of untried prisoners, of floggings and severe tortures inflicted upon men, women, and children, of schoolboys and young girls shamefully beaten. Many of the charges of terrorism and cruelty which he brings against the Japanese administration in Korea have not only been substantiated by independent Japanese witnesses, but practically admitted by the Imperial Government at Tokyo. In August 1919, an Imperial Rescript was issued, announcing that the Government of Korea was to be reformed, the military *gendarmerie* in many districts abolished, and replaced by a civil police under the orders of the local governors, and a Liberal régime instituted, under which Koreans are to enjoy the same civic rights, liberties, and privileges as the Japanese. The Military Party's policy of terrorism and methods of frightfulness have, in fact, been repudiated, and assurances publicly given that the administration will henceforward be conducted in accordance with the principles originally laid down by Prince Ito, who deprecated forcible exploitation and aimed at securing a genuine amalgamation of the Koreans with the Japanese Empire by processes of education and conciliation. There are many observers in the Far East who doubt the efficacy, not to say the sincerity, of

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these latest reforms, and who believe that the policy of forcible assimilation, and with it unjust exploitation, will be maintained. Mr. McKenzie, amongst others, holds that, unless Japanese Liberalism and a policy of peaceful expansion can abolish the Militarists and their methods once and for all (of which there is as yet no sign), Japan's harsh rule in Korea, and her policy of aggression in China, will continue, and "eventually produce a titanic conflict, of which none can foresee the end."

If these observers are correct in their views, the prospect of peace in the Far East and goodwill towards men is indeed remote. But whether the policy of the Japanese Government in the immediate future proves to be wisely Liberal or harshly oppressive, one fact remains obvious, namely, that many of those who sympathise most strongly with the misfortunes of the Korean people, fail to perceive that the cause and claims of common humanity, and the cause of Korean political independence, are two separate and distinct questions. There is also a very prevalent tendency to overlook the incontestable fact that many of the pains and penalties suffered by the Koreans since the active assertion of their claims to independence are primarily due to the false hopes inspired in the patriotic leaders of that movement by President Wilson and other well-meaning political visionaries. Mr. McKenzie, at all events, is under no delusion on this score. "If any outsider was responsible for the uprising of the Korean people," he declares, "that outsider was Woodrow Wilson, President of the United States." His declaration that the civilised world was determined henceforth to protect the rights of weaker nations, was "the clarion call to Korea: here was the promise of freedom, given by the head of the nation they had all learned to love." The grievous fate which swiftly overtook the unsophisticated people who hearkened to that clarion call, the bitter disappointment that awaited their young delegates and leaders, first in America

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and then at Versailles, should surely suffice to prevent even those who sympathise most profoundly with the Korean people from incurring this kind of responsibility, and from encouraging another self-determination movement, at least until the day comes when the League of Nations shall have become an authoritative Tribunal and the acknowledged keeper of the conscience of the world.

The thirty-three Korean patriots who signed and promulgated the Declaration of Independence (and paid heavily for their courage) fully believed that President Wilson's words proclaimed the end of Korea's centuries of vassaldom. "A new era," they declared, "wakes before our eyes, the old world of force is gone, and the new world of righteousness and truth is here." Of practical politics, of the great world beyond the Hermit Kingdom, these simple old-world scholars and guileless enthusiasts knew little or nothing; they only knew that, under the rule of Japan, they were humiliated and unhappy, and that "after the agony of ten years of foreign oppression," the clarion call had sounded which was to give them unfettered liberty. Had they studied the history of their own country in the light of international affairs; had they remembered how many of the great Powers, America included, had solemnly guaranteed its independence and then acquiesced without protest in its annexation as an integral part of the Japanese Empire, they might well have hesitated before starting on their forlorn crusade. Well had it been for them had they been advised to stop and consider how far President Wilson's words might be relied upon to represent a definite American policy; well had they remembered that, only a decade before, President Roose velt had declined to intervene on behalf of Korea's independence, on the ground that "it was out of the question to suppose that any other nation, with no interest of its own at stake, would do for the Koreans what they were utterly unable to do for themselves."

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Had any practical statesmanship been available to guide the counsels of the Korean leaders, they must have realised that, pending the establishment of a League of Nations invested with moral or physical authority sufficient to enable it to restrain the elemental forces and instincts which impel strong nations to expand at the expense of their weak neighbours, Japan will continue to invoke the law of self-preservation as justification for asserting her supremacy in Korea, as a matter of vital necessity imposed by economic and strategical conditions. For the last fifty years, Korea has been (to use Mr. Churchill's phrase) the lynch-pin of Japanese policy, the key-land of north-eastern Asia. Her utter helplessness has made her the cockpit of the Far East and a constant cause of wars between her powerful neighbours, in which wars her twenty million people have played the part of apathetic spectators, all their political activities concentrated meanwhile upon internal strife, on treasons, stratagems, and spoils. If Japan had not defeated China in 1895, Korea would still be that country's humble and misgoverned vassal. Had Japan not fought Russia in 1904, the peninsula must then have passed into the possession of the Slav. And even the sincerest of Korean patriots can hardly overlook the fact that Japanese ascendancy was materially assisted from 1905 onwards by the Il Chin Hoi and other pro-Japanese groups of native politicians, and that the *gendarmerie*, by whom most of the brutalities of last year were committed, consisted, to some extent, of Koreans in Japanese pay.

I had occasion to discuss the whole question of Japanese policy in Korea in February of last year with Dr. Midzuno, the new Director-General of Administration, at Seoul. While gravely deprecating and regretting the excesses committed by the militarists in the past, and expressing his belief that a Liberal and conciliatory policy would produce good results, especially when Korea becomes properly represented in the Imperial Diet, Dr. Midzuno

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denied that the Independence demonstration of 1919 was in any true sense a national movement. He reminded me that, even against their own Emperor, after China's suzerainty had been abolished in 1898, the malcontents of the Independence Club had started a popular agitation, kept the country in a ferment for months, and finally been suppressed by the Conservative party and the "Pedlars' Guild" Secret Society, with great severity. He pointed out that, from 1894 to 1904, when Korea was an independent kingdom, the country demonstrated its incapacity for self-government, foreigners being the first to recognise the truth that no man's life or property was safe from the rapacity of the Court party and their myrmidons. He emphasised the fact that independent and competent observers, like Mr. Frederick Coleman and Mr. A. Judson Brown, have testified in their writings to the material improvement which has taken place in the condition of the Korean peasantry under Japanese administration. Finally we came to the question of the League of Nations and the inherent right of small nations to self-determination and the pursuit of their own kind of happiness.

Dr. Midzuno is a distinguished scholar, a student of international politics, and a firm believer in the Ito tradition of administration. "Japan," he said, "is all in favour of the League, but as a matter of practical politics, as things are, she can no more accept the idea of an independent Korea than Great Britain can afford to recognise an independent Irish Republic."

Later on, discussing the same question in Tokyo with Japanese statesmen and diplomats, I heard the same opinion, often more bluntly expressed. "It will be time enough to consider the question as one of international importance," said an official of the Foreign Office, "when the League of Nations is in a position to enforce recognition of the equality of races, and to guarantee Korea against the political influence and aggressive designs of other Powers."

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But out of the evils of the uprising of 1919, some good has come. The strength and sober restraint of the movement in Seoul, the earnestness of its dignified leaders, belonging to the older generation in Korea, together with its forcible appeal to the conscience of the civilised world, all had an unmistakable effect upon the Japanese Government. Judging by what I saw and heard in Seoul and Tokyo, I believe that the Japanese authorities have now been led to perceive that the policy of forcible assimilation has been, and must continue to be, a failure, because it merely tends to evoke a strong spirit of nationalism among the Koreans and to increase their hatred of their new rulers. In attempting to break the spirit of the Korean people and to make them accept "assimilation," Japan has come up against an unsuspected quality of quiet determination in the Korean character, a quality which, beneath the appearance of apathy, makes the Korean a passive resister and conscientious objector of the most dogged type, too proud or too weak to fight, but ready for martyrdom, if needs be. The Japanese Government has discovered, as the independent investigator sent from Tokyo by the Constitutional Party reported, that "it is a great mistake of Colonial policy to attempt to enforce upon the Koreans, with their two thousand years of history, the same spiritual and mental training as that of the Japanese people."

Meanwhile, as the case of Korea has been taken up by a number of Labour members and "Wee Frees" in the House of Commons, and in America by many ardent believers in the pure gospel of self-determination, it is desirable that they should be quite clear in their minds as to the remedial measures to be proposed and the manner of their application. In this connection it is of interest to note that the Provisional Government of the Korean Republic, with its "headquarters" at Shanghai, resembles irreconcilable Sinn Fein, in that it declines to entertain any discussion of local autonomy,

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*Author's Photo*]

A KOREAN FAMILY IN WINTER COSTUME.

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CORNER OF THE AUDIENCE HALL IN THE OLD PALACE, SEOUL.

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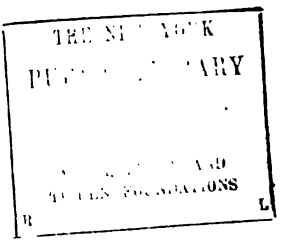
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Dominion Home Rule, or full State rights for Korea as an integral part of the Japanese Empire, but asserts an unswerving claim to absolute and complete independence. It differs from Sinn Fein inasmuch as its methods are essentially those of passive resistance; but its young "Intellectual" leaders (mostly educated at Universities abroad), who have joined together to form a Cabinet *in partibus*, cling firmly to the Wilsonian doctrine of self-determination, and they are just as fully convinced as Sinn Fein of their ability to organise and maintain a model Republic, equipped with all the latest improvements. Like Young China, they completely ignore the fact that the great majority of their countrymen are by nature and education totally unfit to co-operate in any system of representative government, and that the establishment of a Republic in Korea could therefore only mean, as in China, the unchecked exploitation of the masses by a small privileged class. And just as Young China, while proclaiming its infallible panaceas, has failed to do anything whatsoever to improve the condition of the masses, either physically or spiritually, so Young Korea, as represented by this self-elected Cabinet at Shanghai, remains wholly absorbed in the political aspects of the situation. Needless to say, these very able and interesting young men do not represent the feelings and needs of the Korean peasantry so much as those of the "Korean National Association," a society founded in America by Mr. Ahn Chang-ho, which claims to have a membership of over a million Koreans, living in voluntary exile throughout Manchuria, Siberia, and China. Mr. Ahn, Minister for Labour in the Provisional Cabinet, has always been distinguished for activity in the field of political and patriotic agitation. At Shanghai, last February, he declared that the Cabinet was being regularly sustained by funds voluntarily paid as taxes by the Korean people, "who recognise our Government as the only government to which they owe allegiance." (Much in the same spirit, in moments of

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expansion, the Chinese Republican leader, Sun Yat-sen, and his friends, are wont to declare that millions of their countrymen are ready to follow them and their ideas to the death.) One may sympathise with, and admire, those ardent spirits, but those foreigners who encourage them to hope for the early fulfilment of their political aspirations are no better than the blind leaders of blind, and the result of such encouragement can only be to involve the unsophisticated and inarticulate Korean people in further misfortunes.

Politicians of the ultra-modern school, who profess to see neither danger nor difficulty in self-determination all round; those who believe that the world will be happier and more peaceful when Ireland, India, Egypt, and every turbulent State in Europe has been handed over to the tender mercies of the group of word-spinners which happens to be in the ascendant, will no doubt find the case of Korea exceedingly simple. But to those old-fashioned people, with whom human nature and accomplished facts still carry a certain weight, it will probably continue to be advisable, in considering this question and its best solution, to devote a certain measure of attention to the point of view of the Japanese Government, if only because all the civilised Powers have recognised the fact that Korea forms part of the Japanese Empire. It is highly desirable that the practical side of the question should not be completely obliterated by the sentimental, so that, when the question comes before the Tribunal of the League of Nations (be it only for the registration of a pious opinion) the heathen blaspheme not, and the true friends of Korea be not stultified. It is devoutly to be hoped that, either with or without the League, some equitable settlement of many questions in the Far East may be reached before Germany emerges again upon the scene in her accustomed rôle of "honest broker." But in preparing for such a settlement, we may as well face the fact that, so long as the European and American nations are not prepared

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to confine their activities within the limits of their own geographical frontiers, it is futile to expect Japan to withdraw from Korea. Great Britain, ruling India, and making ready to establish a thinly-veiled protectorate over Persia; France, holding large provinces of what was once China; the United States, steadily expanding, for the protection of its position at Panama, over all the smaller States of the Caribbean seaboard: upon what moral grounds can any of these Powers approach Japan and ask her, in the name of humanity and civilisation, to surrender her dominion over Korea? Only by some self-denying ordinance, universally applied, could the high moral argument be invoked, and the only alternative is the argument of force. Russia, Germany, and France invoked that argument in 1895, when Japan was compelled to hand back the Liaotung peninsula to China, so that it might be laid open to Russia's "peaceful penetration"; and Japan has not forgotten that object lesson of Europe's benevolent sympathy for the oppressed.

Apart from the admitted severities of Japan's military régime in Korea, and setting aside all irresponsible counsels of political idealism, the Japanese Government asserts its justification for remaining as the supreme Power in the peninsula on grounds similar to those which, in the opinion of reasonable men, justify Great Britain in retaining control of Egypt. The record of Japan's progressive activities in Korea has been dispassionately summarised by an American,[1] for the enlightenment of his countrymen, in the following words:

"In December 1918 there were 336,872 Japanese in Korea, of whom 66,943 were in Seoul. What are they doing for the country and its 18,000,000 people? Its range on range of bare hills remind one, travelling from the seaport of Fusan to Seoul, of New Mexico and Arizona, or Spain, or Algeria. This is because the improvident

[1] Charles H. Sherrill, *op. cit.*

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Koreans nearly denuded the country of its splendid forests. The Japanese (successful foresters, as their own pine-clad hills show) have set out no less than 473,000,000 trees in Korea and are still pressing on with its reforestation. They are employing as many Koreans as possible; over three times as many as were so employed in 1910. April 3 was selected as Arbour Day, and six years later over 750,000 participated in its beneficent exercises. The output of the Korean coal-mines has been nearly trebled since 1910. Her foreign trade went up from 59,000,000 *yen* in 1910 to 131,000,000 in 1917. Her railway mileage has doubled under Japanese control. Savings are being encouraged, as appears from the last available report (January 1917), which shows 827,215 Korean depositors and an increase of 177,687 individuals during the preceding year. . . . Both highways and street extensions show handsome increase, and Seoul, with its many broad avenues, is, thanks to the Japanese, one of the best-paved cities in the Orient. Extensive harbour improvements have transformed the old-fashioned Korean ports into models of modern embarkation points. Especially have the Japanese encouraged agriculture in their new province, and thereby secured constantly increasing benefits for the inhabitants, of whom 80 per cent. are normally agriculturalists, producing 70 per cent. of their country's exports. Model farms, experimental stations, and training schools have been set up in many centres, and over 1,000,000 *yen* is thus annually expended to uplift the Korean farmer. Left to himself, he would cultivate nothing but rice, and when it was harvested, wait till next season for the same crop, but the Japanese are teaching him new side-lines—fruit trees, cotton, sugar-beet, hemp, tobacco, silkworms, sheep-breeding, etc. An increase of several hundred per cent. in wheat, bean, and barley acreage has been achieved. The cotton acreage increased from 1123 *cho* in 1910 to 48,000 in 1917, and the number of fruit trees more than trebled. Numerous factories, something hitherto unknown in the land, have been introduced, affording occupation for thousands of Koreans. Startling improvements in health conditions have been effected by means of hygienic inspection and Government hospitals and by new waterworks everywhere. The schools, especially industrial schools, are vigorously and successfully combating the old Korean

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ignorance and shiftlessness. The foregoing is a fair picture of Japanese rule in Korea, and it richly deserves to be hung alongside of the one depicting England's service to Egypt, nor need it fear comparison."

From personal observation on the spot (a brief survey only of the surface of things), I am convinced that the general condition of the Korean peasantry and their standard of living are appreciably higher to-day than ever they were, or could have been, under Korean administration. And if this be admitted, the practical question next presents itself: is it not desirable that this material and educational progress should continue, even under alien rulers, until such time as the Koreans are either fit for self-government, or in a position to claim complete social and economic equality with the Japanese as fellow-subjects? Would not the immediate application of the principle of self-determination (if it were possible) merely throw the country back into the chaotic helplessness of the old Hermit Kingdom? Does not the example of present-day China afford sufficient proof of the folly of endeavouring to apply Republican principles to a people which is by nature and traditions incapable of organising any form of representative government? The real Korean question lies here: to devise an alternative to Japanese rule, which shall give the country (and its neighbours) a reasonable prospect of peace and progress.

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# PART II

## STUDIES AND IMPRESSIONS

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## CHAPTER XI

### ON A JAPANESE PACIFIC LINER

It was the good ship *Shinyo Maru*, and she sailed from San Francisco for Japan on December 4, 1919, with a full complement of passengers, saloon and steerage. When I say that she sailed, I mean that by noon all the passengers were aboard and that by six o'clock she had put out from the wharf into the harbour, but, as a matter of fact, it was not until next morning that we put forth into the deep. For there was a great gale blowing beyond the Golden Gate, a heavy sea breaking on the bar, and very little chance of being able to drop the pilot outside. The Japanese shipping companies are great sticklers for schedules; there is nothing in their methods or movements of that easy-going indifference to dates which marks the comings and goings of most British and American vessels in these waters; but they are also prudent mariners, taking no risk of wind and tide. At 8 a.m., therefore, we passed out through the Golden Gate, and straightway many weak vessels went below, to seek the refuge that the cabin grants.

Our saloon passengers were a strange consortium of East and West. The Japanese were in the majority, the rest composed of Americans of many types, Britishers for Hongkong and the China Ports, Scandinavians, Russians, and a plentiful sprinkling of the chosen people. China was represented by one solitary individual, as far as the saloon was concerned, and the fact was eloquent of the force which at that moment lay behind the anti-Japanese boycott. The steerage passengers, fore and aft, were practically all Japanese. Of the six hundred there were



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only nine Chinese, half a dozen Hindoos, and a few Filipinos. As a rule, in normal times of amity, the Toyo Kisen Kaisha carries large numbers of Celestials, and the forward steerage is given over to them exclusively, for peace sake; but as the result of the boycott they had taken to travelling by other lines, and *per contra*, the "China Mail" boats carried hardly any Japanese. So much for "the ties with a kindred Asiatic race" of the Pan-Asian dream! So much for the poetic fiction of "East is East and West is West" when tested in the stern struggle for race survival. There are, no doubt, insuperable barriers of creed and colour between East and West, permanent causes of jealousy and distrust between Anglo-Saxons and Japanese, born of trade rivalry and racial ambitions, but they are mild in their effects when compared with the antagonism which the events of the past ten years have created between the Chinese and their cousins of the land of the Rising Sun.

On the neutral soil of California the clear-cut division between the two races is plainly manifested to-day in mutual contempt and dislike. Both Chinese and Japanese mix freely with the American community for purposes of business and pleasure, but rarely at the same time and place. The China Commerce Club invites no Japanese to its luncheons and receptions nowadays; to do so would merely make everybody uncomfortable, and this despite the fact that the leading members of the Japanese community are men of liberal education and broad views, who have many American friends. It is unquestionably true that public opinion in California is much more friendly disposed towards the Chinese than towards the Japanese at the present time; but it would, I think, be unwise to attach too much importance to this fact, or, because of it, to ascribe to either race any permanence of superior virtue. The sympathies and antipathies of nations are not deep-rooted in racial origins, as some would have us believe. Broadly speaking, they reflect the ever-changing conditions of economic

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necessity, new phases in the world-wide struggle for survival. A century ago, England and Germany were fighting France; fifty years hence, the United States may have to defend its amassed wealth against a hungry League of European nations. Fifteen years ago, when Japan fought Russia, American sympathy was all with the Land of the Rising Sun, and during the past thirty years the Chinese settlers in California and Canada have more than once had occasion to complain of harsh treatment. To-day's distinct preference of the Californian for the Chinese is easily explained: he has come to be recognised as an indefatigable worker, without inclination or capacity for aggression, a passive resister on occasions, but asking little more than to be allowed to glean a little wealth in the land of plenty, and then to return, dead or alive, to his ancestral home. He brings no women with him, makes no claim to rights of citizenship or the open door, raises no contentious issues. Therefore California, needing efficient labour in many fields of industry, looks kindly on the Chinese. But the Japanese, more and more inclined—nay, compelled—to claim a place in the sun for their surplus, hungry millions; a race that has proved itself ready and able to fight for that place—this is a very different matter. Here is the Yellow Peril knocking at the Californian's door, an economic menace not to be denied, an issue in which every instinct of self-preservation comes directly into conflict with Utopian idealism and the doctrine of the Brotherhood of Man. And just as most Americans fail to realise the inexorable necessity which compels Japan to seek expansion overseas, so the average Japanese fails to recognise the insuperable force of the self-preserving instinct, which leads the white races to refuse to grant rights of citizenship and unfettered competition to Asiatics—to sign, in fact, their own death warrant. Only fuller knowledge, a better understanding on both sides, can ever solve a problem such as this.

Aboard the *Shinyo Maru*, as in California, the East was

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frankly divided against itself and the West stood watchfully between. There were a good number of Cantonese stewards, working side by side with Japanese in the saloon, and the cook's galley was a Chinese monopoly. But the Company had found it possible to prevent outbreaks of battle, murder, and sudden death amongst them, by rigidly enforcing the drastic rule that in every case of battery and assault, all concerned were instantly dismissed. It was clear to the least observant eye that there was no love lost between the representatives of the two races, and that fierce passions smouldered beneath the damper of enforced neutrality, but as far as the passengers were concerned, their rivalry was conducive to efficient service. According to Mr. Kawakami, the Japanese are the only civilised race in Asia. It may be so—it all depends upon whether we regard civilisation as a product of machinery, or a state of mind—but, speaking for myself, I must confess that in the mixed company of our saloon, I frequently found myself reflecting that the Cantonese stewards cut a more dignified figure, seemed nearer to the philosophic ideal of the Superior Man, than all the rest of us put together. The Chinese attitude towards life in general makes them, as a race, an embodiment of the Intellectual Ideal. Incidentally, it also explains the failure of this ideal to achieve material reward in the world of things-as-they-are.

All the executive officers of the Toyo Kisen Kaisha are now Japanese—the last of the English captains have been replaced since 1917—but the *Shinyo Maru* carries, nevertheless, for the benefit of non-Japanese passengers, a " travelling " doctor (American), an Irish chief steward, an English purser, and an American barber. After a good deal of experience in all the Seven Seas, I can honestly say that I know of few steamship routes on which the passenger will find more kindly consideration, more courtesy and care, than on this Japanese line. And this courtesy and consideration are by no means confined

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*Author's Photo*]

THE MOATED WALLS OF CHIYODA PALACE.

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ON BOARD A JAPANESE LINER: A WRESTLING BOUT.

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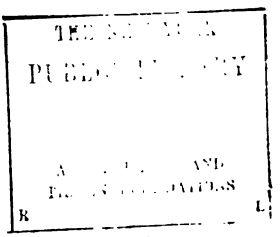
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to the saloon passengers. For the steerage, there are theatrical performances and wrestling matches, organised, and obviously enjoyed, by the crew; and on Sundays there are religious services, conducted by Japanese Christians and attended by surprisingly large congregations.

The number of small children belonging to the Japanese steerage passengers on this voyage was remarkable: there were some seventy of them. Now every one of these quaint little bundles is a political asset of no small importance to Japan, because, as an American-born citizen, he or she can claim rights of land tenure denied to, and coveted by, the ordinary Japanese immigrant. It is evident that the fundamental purpose of the "gentleman's agreement" will be nullified, or at least greatly modified, if large numbers of Japanese children are born on American soil. It is also evident that the marriages of "picture brides" in California were an expedient devised and quietly encouraged to promote that end. It was a characteristically Oriental stratagem, intended to take advantage of the curiously unpractical and self-contradictory nature of America's naturalisation laws, and to build up, within the letter of those laws, rapidly increasing Japanese communities, with full rights of citizenship, on American soil. It seemed therefore, at first sight, a surprising thing that the *Shinyo Maru* should be taking back to Japan so many valuable little stakes pegged out at such pains in the land of promise. Economically, and perhaps politically, a Japanese child born in California should be worth its weight in gold. There was a certain distinguished member of the Japanese Diet on board, and to him I went, seeking information as to the reason for the return to their native land of all these fortunate parents and their precious offspring. Anxious, no doubt, to improve the shining hour, he said that he believed these humble workers were leaving the inhospitable shores of America because the attitude of the Californians towards them had made it impossible

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for them to continue to live there any longer with any peace of mind or self-respect. But subsequent and more direct inquiries served to show that the member of the Diet was either misleading or misled. I ascertained that nearly all these families were going back to Japan for a holiday, with plenty of money in their pockets; returning to their native haunts, much as the Irish do, to astonish their kinsfolk with unwonted prodigality and tales of adventure; to put the elder children to school and let the younger learn something of the glories of Dai Nippon; but all fully intending to return before long to the land of easy money. They were, in fact, mostly joy-riders, and as cheerful a lot of human beings as one could wish to meet.

But the steerage contained also another and a sad type of home-coming Japanese—the sick, the broken-down, and the crippled, returning to die in the land of their fathers. The pitiful story of this human wreckage was emphasised by immediate contact and contrast with all the young and joyous life about them; no doubt but that they felt the pathos of it themselves, for suicides were sadly frequent occurrences in that sad company. On the previous trip of the *Shinyo Maru* there had been four cases; there is seldom a voyage in which some of these unfortunates do not slip overboard, unnoticed, to oblivion. On this trip one case occurred, typical of the old Japanese ideal of conjugal fidelity. At midnight, under the pale glimpses of the stars, a husband and wife tied themselves together and jumped overboard, leaving a polite note of apology to the Captain, with a pathetic little valedictory verse from "two dewdrops that merge softly in the sea." The husband was a young bank clerk, invalided home with consumption, and with nothing but pain and poverty to look forward to for himself and his wife; and so, when the moonlight lay like silver upon the wine-dark sea, they "perished on the midnight, without pain." Surely, a beautiful death. But the frequency of suicides amongst the younger generation of

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the Japanese seems to be one of several symptoms of social instability, of the unhealthy unrest of a people which has striven to divest itself too rapidly of the old ways, the old wisdom, of the East. Happily, in Japan itself one finds evidence to-day of a healthy reaction against this feverish modernism.

There was a band of alleged musicians aboard the *Shinyo Maru*, a well-meaning quartette of industrious blowers and scrapers, whose business it was to produce dance music, grand opera, or hymns, as required, which they did with a perfectly obvious indifference to melody or harmony. It is natural enough, I suppose, that ultra-modern Japan should wish to prove that there is nothing in the outfit of Western civilisation which cannot be produced from her own native sources; nevertheless, these attempts to make European music popular, not only as an art, but as a profession, seem to me pathetically suggestive of laudable intentions misdirected. In Tokyo they will assure you that the masses really understand and enjoy the band music which is dispensed to them by the au'horities, and you will hear much learned argument based on the meteoric career of Madame Myra; but for all that, I venture to assert that it is no more possible to popularise the music of Europe in China or Japan than to make these people appreciate the doctrines of our sectarian Churches, and for precisely the same reason. It is undeniable, I admit, that here and there individuals may be able to perform the necessary miracle of psychic acrobatics; but for the masses, the feat is simply impossible. In the matter of European band music, Japan would be well advised to allow the gentle Filipino to discourse it. But if, as a matter of patriotic policy, Japanese liners must carry home-made bands, then let them at least not play to us whilst we eat. Their efforts, however chaotic, may be defensible when confined to the production of the noise required by those who fox-trot and shimmy it on the quarter deck; but they serve to wreck the first travail of digestion.

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That which strikes one most forcibly after a few days at sea aboard a Japanese liner, is the meticulous quality of the official organisation, which attends to every detail of the passenger's day, which has an hour for everything and everything at its hour. It is evidently part of the business of the Captain and crew to see to it that the travelling public shall never lack for entertainment. The wireless news service is chiefly conspicuous by its absence, but the ship's printer is kept so busy with programmes and announcements of every kind, that for seventeen days we are quite content to dispense with news of the outside world, to play our own little harmless games, and forget those of the politician. Of an evening there is always something doing: exhibitions of Japanese fencing and wrestling, generally excellent; moving pictures of the kind that make one blush for our Western manners and morals *in partibis infidelium;* concerts, dances, and lectures (the last chiefly by Japanese for Japanese)—all winding up with the Captain's farewell dinner, and a well-worn speech in English by that worthy mariner. As one surrenders oneself to the routine of an existence in which everything from bath to bedtime proceeds smoothly "according to plan," one begins to realise dimly what life must be in Japan under a bureaucratic system which is merely the old feudalism slightly modified in externals, and which relieves the masses of all necessity, or indeed of any opportunity, of thinking for themselves.

The cost of the journey across the Pacific, of seventeen halcyon days' travel, not to mention board and lodging, appeared to me, a year ago (no doubt, like everything else, it has since gone up), to be one of the few surviving instances of value for money on this distressful planet. The price of the ticket worked out at about $15 a day, which, as times go, seems a very modest sum to pay for the privilege of existing, not to speak of being carried across six thousand miles of ocean. All the same, unless you happen to be a teetotaller, the journey may prove expensive in the end, for the American and the Japanese

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liners have bound themselves by an unholy pact to bleed without mercy any man who chooses to season his meat with wine or his tobacco with spirits. Talk of profiteering! The cost of a bottle of Scotch whisky in Yokohama is, roughly, $1 gold; they make you pay $6 for it on the Pacific Mail and Japanese boats. Champagne is $10 (fifty shillings, egad!) a bottle, cocktails two shillings, and everything else in proportion. Last spring the Nippon Yusen Kaisha paid its shareholders a dividend of 70 per cent. and a little bonus of 100 per cent.; since then they have announced their intention to raise the rates of passenger travel on the ground that the present charges do not cover expenses. It may be so—since the war company finance has passed far beyond the range of an ordinary man's understanding—but whatever the charge for the passage may be, one would like, once aboard, to be allowed to forget both Pussyfoot and Profiteer. Extortion on the high seas rankles worse than on dry land, for the reason that there is no possible means of escape.

The organised efficiency and imitative adaptability of the Japanese race of to-day were very clearly reflected on board the *Shinyo Maru*, and to me, returning to the East after an absence of ten years, there was something very significant and instructive in every fresh manifestation of this adaptability, which, in the lifetime of a man, has mastered all the material secrets of our Western civilisation and most of our parlour tricks as well. As I sat in the smoking-room and watched twenty or thirty typical Japanese of the class that travels—bankers, politicians, doctors, merchants, and students—nearly all wearing European clothes, and dividing their time between games of poker and endless, earnest conversations; as I saw them in the saloon, eating European food and placidly enduring the relentless music, I found myself continually wondering whether the race-mind is, and can be permanently, satisfied with all this alien window-dressing? It pleases me rather to think that, having proved her ability to acquire the gospel of force,

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and achieved her place amongst the great Powers, Japan will see fit some day to return to her own old gracious ways of thinking and living, replacing all these foreign tricks and trappings with things seemly and suitable to the soul of the people. I like to believe in the possible renaissance of the glory that was Old Japan, of her people's birthright of sweetness and beauty, of conscious joy in simple things, of chivalry and self-control. I like to hope for the coming of another Inouye, who shall teach Japan to be true to herself and to cease from following after strange gods.

Take, for example, the question of clothes. Can it be possible that a race of artists like the Japanese are really satisfied with the horrible hybrid appearance of the people as at present arrayed? In the case of their women-folk, thank goodness, they have come to understand that to clothe them in European garments is an offence which cries aloud to heaven. Do the men really fail to realise the utter hideousness and incongruity of their own clothes, especially when contrasted with the dainty charm of Madam Butterfly, or do they wear these reach-me-downs as offerings on the altars of patriotic duty? Of all the Japanese passengers aboard the *Shinyo Maru*, there were only two who wore their own dignified and comfortable national dress, and both, curiously enough, were men who had lived most of their days abroad. When you ask a Japanese whether he really prefers European clothes, the usual reply is that, for purposes of travel or office work, they are more convenient than native dress. This may be true for the very small minority of well-to-do people who can afford a complete European outfit, including boots, but the average individual that one sees in the streets of Tokyo or Osaka presents an appearance that suggests no idea of convenience. A slouchy bagman's hat or cloth cap, a dingy cape overcoat with a fur collar, a shapeless pair of trousers—and the West has done its share of a dreadful business. The East ends it fittingly with white *tabi*

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(stockings) and a pair of high wooden sandals, which our friend removes, as of old, whenever he enters a tea-house and even when he goes shopping at Mitsukoshi's new department store.

A nation which has learned to build and man its own Pacific liners was bound, I suppose, to get gramophones and dress suits and department stores, as part of its competitive outfit; there is even talk, here and there, of a movement for adopting some form of Christianity as the national religion, on the same principle. In the smoking-room of the *Shinyo Maru*, I frequently discussed these things at great length with the member of the Diet aforesaid and a rich steel-plate manufacturer from Kobe, both men of liberal, not to say radical, views. And in the minds of both, beneath their complacent satisfaction at Japan's material progress, I found unmistakable signs of that which I, too (though only a passer-by), feel and fear: apprehension of the perils of change which lie beyond.

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## CHAPTER XII

### MODERN TOKYO

"WHAT wonderful changes you must see!" Here in Tokyo, as in Shanghai, when you tell any one that it is years since you last visited these parts, the set phrase greets you inevitably, a regular shibboleth. Moreover, whether it comes from a native or a foreign resident, the manner of its utterance clearly implies that you are expected to express amazement at the prodigious progress which the city has achieved since last you saw it. As to the magnitude and multitude of the changes which have taken place in Tokyo, there can be neither doubt nor discussion; they confront you at every step. During the last ten years the population has increased from 858,000 to 3,000,000, of whom nearly 300,000 are employed in industrial labour. Since 1917 the number of factories has increased twofold, the cost of living has risen swiftly to the European level, and strikes have become a favourite form of recreation amongst all classes of manual workers. The chief business districts of the city are altered beyond all recognition; only a few ancient landmarks remain, here and there, little islets of stability in an ocean of change, to remind one of the tranquil Tokyo of bygone days. And far beyond the city limits of those days, crowded residential suburbs have sprung up, in places where one remembers seeing little villages clustering and rice-fields shimmering in the sun. Where once the *kuruma* ran through quiet little streets to a rhythmical accompaniment of the *vox humana*, the clamour of tramcars now resounds, amidst great blocks of buildings in the European style, and motor-cars combine with



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handcarts, bicycles, and jinrickshas to produce a very horrid congestion of traffic. There are now whole streets of shops with window displays in the latest foreign style, and at the great department stores, like Mitsukoshi's, Madame Butterfly and Madame Morning Glory, with their babies on their backs, may snatch a fearful and exotic joy from electric lifts, moving stairways, and shopping to the strains of an alleged Strauss.

Oh yes, there is no question as to the greatness of the changes, and if we cling to the creed of the virtuous Victorians, who declared that "progress is the kind of improvement which can be measured by statistics," then Tokyo has undoubtedly progressed. If (to quote Dean Inge) we accept the view that a nation which travels sixty miles an hour must be five times as civilised as one which travels only twelve, then the capital of Japan to-day greatly excels in civilisation the ancient city of the Tokugawa Shogunate, of which, nevertheless, the poets continue to sing. Whether or not to join in the chorus of congratulation which the up-to-date citizen evidently expects, must depend upon one's individual conception of the meaning of the words "civilisation" and "progress." If the ultimate aim of human endeavour is to produce a great increase of population, gathered together in huge cities, making vast quantities of unnecessary things by machinery, with ever-increasing noise and haste, so be it: wisdom may yet be justified of her children. But for myself, looking as an old friend upon Tokyo and other cities of Japan, and remembering the many grateful and gracious things which the present-day materialism has slowly but surely taken from the daily life of these town-dwellers: their simple serenity, their old-world virtues of courtesy and kindliness, I confess myself unable to derive any comfort from the triumphant statistics of their Chambers of Commerce, or any joy from the sight of a dozen motor-cars awaiting their top-hatted owners at the gates of the Diet. If, as I believe, the first aim of a wise civilisation should be to increase the average

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individual's opportunities for rational happiness, then the old Japan was nearer to wisdom than the new, if only because it had a clearer perception of the things that matter, and because its traditions and ideals came nearer to the absolute values of Truth and Beauty. In the streets of Tokyo to-day, as in Glasgow or Chicago or Berlin, the "progress which is measured by statistics" has produced, and is producing, material and spiritual ugliness. There has been, no doubt, a notable advance in the experience and machinery of life, but it is an advance not only unaccompanied by any indication of increased happiness and morality, but one which reveals in itself many symptoms of unrest and discontent.

As I made my way on February 25 along the broad thoroughfare which leads from the Imperial Palace walls to the curiously makeshift Houses of Parliament, to attend there an obviously make-believe debate on the question of universal suffrage, signs of Japan's modernity confronted me at every turn. Bronze statues in honour of departed warriors and word-spinners, hideous enough, in all conscience, to cure most men of any ambition to rival their fame; a regiment of infantry on the march, all wearing black respirators, supposed to be an effective protection against the prevalent influenza; a crowd of citizens, mostly of the student class, arrayed in a fearful and wonderful motley of native and foreign garments; and between them and the Diet, forming a close cordon, several hundred policemen, all very brisk and bristly. As I watched them keeping the crowd at its proper and respectful distance from the approaches to the Diet, some imp of irony whispered in my ear a modern closet-philosopher's catchword about the New World that was to be made free for Democracy, and my mind travelled swiftly from the cloud-capped towers of that splendid Utopia to the realities of the scene before me. For here were the elected, well-paid servants of the sovereign people convened in the name of Democracy for solemn discussion of a matter vitally affecting the people's liberties,

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and all around and about them, another body of public servants, whose duty it was to prevent the said sovereign people from coming anywhere near to their faithful representatives, lest perchance they might do them an injury!

Inside the Diet the scene was stately and impressive. If only all the members (instead of about half) had worn their national dress, it would have been very imposing. As a body, the M.P.s were more distinguished-looking and dignified than I had been led to expect; compared with the raw youths who claim to represent the people in China's or Turkey's parliaments *pour rire*, they gave one the impression of being grave and reverend seigniors, for their average age appeared to be rather over than under forty. All those who held official positions wore European dress, for such is the *mot d'ordre* of the bureaucracy. Most of the Government's contributions to the debate, read from carefully-prepared documents, were received by the House, if not with respectful attention, at least without unseemly interruptions. Even when the Prime Minister suddenly produced an Imperial Rescript whereby the House found itself dissolved without further argument, it preserved its dignity and decorum. But for any one who knew the inner history of the universal Suffrage Bill and the real sentiments of the Kenseikai Radicals on the subject, the whole debate was nothing more than a Barmecide feat of political flapdoodle, "the stuff that fools are fed with." The proceedings gave one, in fact, much the same impression that one gets nowadays in the House by the river at Westminster, an impression of cynical make-believe, of an elaborate farce, well played by highly trained professionals. But the entertainment was none the less popular as a spectacle; every seat in the several divisions of the gallery was filled. I had a ticket of admission to the place which is supposed to be set aside for the Diplomatic Body and persons introduced by the Embassies, but found all its seats occupied by Japanese, an arrangement in which

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the policeman in charge evidently saw nothing to complain of. Having squeezed my way in amongst the spectators standing at the back of the box, I asked my neighbour, an intelligent-looking individual in a top hat, whether all those in front of us were diplomats. "Oh no," he replied, "they are only trespassers."

Later on, as I made my way back on foot in the dusk, along the broad street which runs past the Foreign Office, and thence by the road which skirts the beautiful old Palace moat, to the top of the hill where the British Embassy stands, I came upon a derelict motor-bus, broken-down and miserably marooned in a morass of mud. The sight of it brought forcibly to mind the fact that although Japan has become one of the Big Five, and done many other great things since last I saw the streets of Tokyo, the present state of those streets and of the public services which use them is considerably worse than it was then. It is unquestionably true that the roads of Peking are now better, both as to construction and maintenance, than those of Tokyo; ten years ago the comparison was all the other way. Indeed, the problems of locomotion, transport, and communications in the Japanese capital have become acute. Their unpleasant results are manifest in many directions and most noticeably in the restriction of trade; nevertheless, neither in Parliament nor in the Press is there any evidence of the necessary corrective in the shape of an organised public opinion. The distances in Tokyo from the business centres to the residential suburbs are very great. The tramway services, good enough of their kind, are totally inadequate to the needs of the present population, and the cost of hiring a jinricksha (the poor man's carriage of former days) has risen to such a height that it is often cheaper for two people to hire a taxi than to use the man-drawn vehicle. But as there are practically no motors for hire beyond the radius of the railway stations and large hotels, the average middle-class citizen, who desires to avoid struggling for standing room in a tram, either keeps a

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private jinricksha or a bicycle. For these, in wet weather, the state of the roads, ankle deep in mud, is a constant affliction. The women of the working classes, unable to afford jinricksha hire, have to choose between the chance of an overcrowded tram and walking. On all sides one hears grievous complaints of the high cost of living, which is notably higher in Tokyo than in Yokohama, but except in the case of the rice riots of August 1918, there has been but little sign of any organised expression of public dissatisfaction with the inefficiency of the bureaucracy, which is largely responsible for the unsatisfactory conditions prevailing in the great industrial centres.

And the state of the roads is only one of many symptoms. In Japan, as in other countries, the demoralisation of the postal, telephone, and telegraph services may be ascribed, indirectly at least, to the war, because large numbers of civil servants have left their posts to seek more lucrative employment in factories and offices. But after all, Japan was not actually at war, and only bureaucratic inefficiency and dishonesty can account for the appalling condition of the public services as they are at present all over the country. And nowhere is their disorganisation more conspicuous than in and about the capital. Even within the city limits telephoning is generally a futile waste of time and a weariness of the flesh, and if the community has not given it up entirely as a bad job, the fact is probably due to the equally chaotic state of the postal administration. To get a telephone call through to Yokohama, nineteen miles away, is generally a matter of two or three hours, but to get a reply by post may take days, so that in cases where time is money, it is best to send a private messenger by train. And to judge by the opinions of business men on the spot, these symptoms of official incompetence are by no means local or transient, but chronic, and due to the apathy and ignorance of a bureaucracy which can imitate, but cannot maintain, Western methods,



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and to the prevalence of "graft" of super-Tammany rapacity.

I have mentioned the high cost of living. Generally speaking, the price of food and other necessities has risen more rapidly in Tokyo than in most of the world's great cities, a fact which accounts for much of the prevalent social and political unrest, especially as the pressure on the poorer classes has been accompanied by the emergence of a class of new rich, whose ostentatious display of war-wealth violates all the national traditions of frugality and simplicity. These *narikin*, with their foreign-built houses, their motor-cars, their over-dressed women and unseemly manners, have figured more and more conspicuously in the life of the capital since 1917, and the rice riots of August 1918 showed how greatly their extravagances had contributed to create popular discontent. The new economic conditions resulting from the war are in many respects similar to those in England, especially in the case of the unorganised middle class, which finds itself impoverished and ignored between the profiteers and the proletariat. The rapid growth of the new millionaire class may be gauged by the fact that, whereas in 1914 there were only twenty-two persons in Japan paying income tax on fortunes declared at over 100,000 *yen*, in 1918 there were 336, and this despite the notorious laxity of the revenue collectors in dealing with big incomes.

Taking the year 1909 as a basis, with the index figure 100, the cost of living for bank clerks and other clerical workers had risen in 1919 to 320, and is now considerably higher; in the same period the incomes had increased to *227*. In the case of manual labourers, while the cost of living had increased at about the same rate, wages had risen to 494, or more than twice as much.

Small wonder that under these conditions the birth-rate of the middle class shows a steady decline. The Captain of an ocean-going steamer, with whom I travelled, told me that in the cities, throughout the whole country,

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small families are becoming the rule, whereas they used to be the exception, amongst the professional and educated classes, a direct result of the high cost of living. He himself as a boy cost his parents 5 *yen* a month for school and board; his own two children cost 45 *yen* a month each.

The social results of these conditions are plainly manifest in many directions. In Tokyo, Osaka, and other industrial centres they have produced a ferment of new ideas, much political agitation, and, amongst the younger Intellectuals, manifestations of a spirit of iconoclasm and resistance to parental authority which, in the opinion of some observers, points to a weakening of the family system, upon which the whole social fabric is founded. Those who look chiefly to the surface phenomena of life, as they see it in the chief cities of Japan, can find evidence, no doubt, in support of this view. They can point, for example, to the growth of the movement for the emancipation of women, to the rapid increase of strikes, and the wave of sentiment in support of Labour Unions, to the demand for Universal Suffrage, and to many other things that would have been impossible twenty years ago. But they err, I think, in concluding from these premises and from the rapid development of industrialism that the whole social structure of the nation is imperilled; for they overlook the important truth that the great majority of the people are agricultural, indifferent to politics, and firmly rooted in the customs and beliefs that have sprung from the family system, with all its traditions of loyalty, simple faith, and discipline. More than half the families which constitute the Japanese nation are tillers of the soil; it is they, and not the two million factory workers, who truly represent the abiding strength of the race—silent depths unmoved by all the waves of words that sound so loud in the ears of the city-dwellers. I believe that the structure of society in Japan, as in China, broad-based upon the family system and all that it implies of veneration for the past, will enable the nation to stand

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and survive the economic strain of competitive industrialism.

Even in Tokyo, beneath the froth and foam of unrest on the surface, there is evidence that the solidarity of the family system is producing a reaction against the exotic Westernism and Radicalism of the Intellectuals and other restless followers after new and strange gods. To any one who has not visited Japan for several years, the signs of this reaction are unmistakable and significant. Throughout all classes of society, even amongst the factory workers, there are symptoms of a healthy revival of conscious and confident nationalism, of a tendency to cultivate the indigenous rather than the exotic, to be naturally and frankly Japanese, rather than to imitate the European. The bureaucracy in office hours still exhibits in its clothing, equipment, and manners its deference to an alien civilisation, but in its home life, and even at the Tokyo Club, officialdom displays its preference for native clothes and native food. I have seen two elderly diplomats, men with distinguished records as Ambassadors, playing billiards at the Tokyo Club, both wearing Japanese dress; and at the crowded Christmas reception given by the Imperial Hotel, very few of the guests wore foreign clothes. Most Japanese of the upper classes, especially those who have been educated abroad, will tell you that they find trousers more convenient for office use and exercise than the native *kimono*, but at home they prefer the latter. They might add that, in addition to being more comfortable, it is infinitely more dignified and becoming, especially as, for reasons which remain mysterious, even the richest of the ultra-modern Japanese in foreign clothes always give one the impression that they have bought them ready-made and never troubled about their fit.

But the most significant manifestation of the reaction against Western influences is to be found in art and religion, in the restoration of many ancient customs and ceremonials, things beautiful and venerable by virtue

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of immemorial usage, which fell for a while into disrepute, observed only by the faithful, when, with the end of the Shogunate, the nation became seized with a craze for foreign ways and foreign ideas. In those days the classical drama and many a national shrine were neglected of the people, native arts and crafts languished whilst the nation struggled to fashion its mind and its manners on those of another race, sacrificing in the process much of its natural distinction and dignity. But the flowing tide of that delusion has now ebbed, and to-day the ancient rites and ceremonials are observed with renewed fervour, and the Way of the Gods appeals to the race-mind as of old. Particularly notable is the widespread revival of the ancient classical NO dances, instinct with all the stateliness, grace, and poetry of Japanese culture. The warmth of the welcome extended by all classes to this revival is a very remarkable sign of the times. It would seem to indicate a genuine renaissance rather than a spasmodic reaction, and at the same time to afford evidence of the permanent stability of the national conception of life which has grown with, and out of, the family system. To witness a performance of the NO dances and observe the almost religious devotion of the audience, is an experience which makes one feel that the *narikin* and all his works and ways are but an "unsubstantial pageant" which will fade with all his gorgeous palaces, and "leave not a rack behind." Before he and his motor-cars can fit into the scheme of things Japanese, this land of men and things harmoniously adjusted to its own small but exquisite scale, will have to be shattered and reconstructed. Tokyo's modern thoroughfares, lined with European buildings, filled with the clamour of tramways and the smell of bad petrol, are a necessary evil, like the diplomat's top-hat—Dai Nippon's price of Admiralty; but they are not, and never will be, the real Japan.

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## CHAPTER XIII

### AT A JAPANESE THEATRE

A GREY afternoon in February, with a driving rain and a cold wind which blows in sudden gusts from the four quarters of heaven. A little *musumé*, coming down a side lane, is making heavy weather of it, her kimono close tucked about her knees and her body bending shakily to the squalls behind her oiled-paper umbrella. The mud lies so deep in the narrow thoroughfare that it comes at times above the level of her high-tilted wooden clogs, leaving its mark upon her white socks. Tokyo in winter knows many such days; you may get an idea from Hokusai's pictures of their bleakness, and of their effect upon the human atom. In this street of the Kabuki Theatre, on a day like this, one's thoughts go wandering back to the old Japan, that one knew and loved thirty years ago, before the days of trams and trains, because it is a quiet, old-fashioned street, remote from the bustling modernity of Tokyo's commercial centres. No tramway lines run through it, and motor-cars are scarce; 'tis a street that suggests the dignity of an individuality preserved, and worth preserving, wisely aloof from the crowd that follows the cheapjack vendor of novelties. As our rickshas make their heavy way through the mud, with hoods and side-flaps battened down, and swaying in the wind, one catches glimpses of bamboos and cedars amidst high walls and latticed balconies: little moving pictures, all framed in grey, that stir the mind to dreams of adventure and romance. For behind these walls are some of the most fashionable tea-houses of Tokyo,



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patronised alike by patricians and by profiteers, and frequented by the daintiest damsels of the Geisha world.

The entrance to the theatre is in keeping with its surroundings—unobtrusive, but impressive by virtue of its native simplicity and the sense of fitness displayed in its decoration. Here is no meretricious display, no glaring effect of electric lighting or gaudy posters, but a little open court or vestibule, level with the street, where the audience leaves its clogs or boots, all neatly ticketed in rows; and behind it, decorated with painted screens and lanterns, a narrow corridor, carpeted with white matting, that leads directly into the body of the theatre, or, as we should call it, the pit. Inside, the house is much larger than its exterior would have led one to expect, and here, again, one is impressed by the artistic restraint and harmony of the decorative scheme, with its plain gilded ceiling and graceful carving. All around the gallery hang ornamental paper lanterns that soften the glare of the electric light; if the hieroglyphics painted on their sides are the advertisement of a face-powder, the fact is pleasantly unobtrusive. The stage is long and wide, and the flies, hung low, add to the impression of its depth; the scenery is extremely effective, conforming always to the classical conventions, rich without gaudiness, beautiful in its ensemble and colouring, and, to the initiated, intensely significant in its details.

In the body of the house are the boxes—little squares partitioned off from each other, where four or five persons can squat comfortably in the Oriental manner and leave room in their midst for the charcoal brazier and a tray with cups for tea or cake. These are the best and most expensive seats in the house; here you may see Tokyo, both *en famille* and *en garçon*, enjoying itself thoroughly and at its leisure. For the performance at the Kabuki, consisting generally of three or four plays, begins at one o'clock in the afternoon and lasts till about ten. There are intervals of twenty-five minutes between each play, during which the audience either consumes its own

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miscellaneous refreshments or repairs to the restaurant on the upper floor, where meals are served both in the European and the native style.

The stage is more popular in Japan to-day, and takes itself more seriously, than at any time in the past fifty years. Ten years ago most of the play-houses of Tokyo were struggling for a bare existence, and many of the best actors played to half-empty houses. To-day, despite the new attraction of the cinema, every theatre is crowded, and enterprising managers are planning new and larger buildings in several cities, while the salaries of popular favourites have soared to figures hitherto unknown. The change is due partly to the increased earnings of the working classes and the general prosperity created by the war, and partly, no doubt, to a general restlessness and hunger for amusement, signs of the disjointed times, as conspicuous in Japan as in other parts of the world. In Tokyo the phenomenon is also explained by the rapid growth of the city's population, and by the fact that a large number of its three million inhabitants are industrial workers, for whom the theatre provides a welcome relief from the monotony of mechanical labour.

But of all the theatres in Japan there is none so secure in the intelligent appreciation of the people as this home of the classical national drama, nor have any of the brilliant young players of the younger generation achieved the same high place in the loyal affection of the public as the veteran actors of the Kabuki-za. The fact speaks well, I think, both for the public and the players, because all the aspirations and achievements of such popular idols as Nakamura Utayemon and Ichikawa Chusha are based upon an unswerving tradition of high seriousness, upon fidelity to national ideals, and preservation of the classical style, the great inheritance of the Yedo school.

On the day of my visit to the Kabuki, the usual "house full" notice was up, in spite of the weather, before two o'clock; not even in the gallery was there standing room. Of the three plays on the programme one was a ghost

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tale, the second a drama based on the well-worn theme of a retainer's loyalty to his feudal chief, and the third a historical play—"Benke," the tragic love story of a priest who became a great warrior. Throughout all three the note of high seriousness was consistently sustained, together with an amazing harmony of effect, down to the minutest details of stagecraft and a subtle sense of perfection such as Art can only give at its highest pitch of intensive culture. As I sat absorbed in the weird, insidious beauty of the ghost play, wondering at the grace and dignity with which Utayemon (now over sixty years of age) played the young woman's part, and the delicate concordance of scenery and music with the innermost spirit of the drama, my mind went back to the day, more than thirty years ago, when for the first time I saw Danjuro the ninth—when, without understanding the language, I learned to appreciate the fine flower of dramatic art, which generations of great players have brought to such perfection in Japan. The style and methods of the great Danjuro are a tradition and a living force on the Tokyo stage to-day, jealously preserved by his two famous pupils, Ichikawa Danshiro and Ichikawa Chusha, and by them faithfully handed down to the rising stars of the next generation. There is something of almost religious devotion in the attitude of these great actors towards the classical traditions of their profession and in the relations which exist between masters and pupils of the craft. In many instances, notably those of Nakamura Utayemon and Ichikawa Danshiro, the tradition passes direct from father to son in an atmosphere of discipline and filial piety like that of Chinese scholars of the golden age of learning and their disciples.

There are no women on the boards of the Kabuki Theatre, for mixed companies are forbidden by the laws of the classical drama. Of the great women impersonators (Onnagata)—each marvellous in his way—the most famous are Nakamura Utayemon, above mentioned, his son Fukusuke, and Onoe Baiko, who specialises in the weird

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at the Imperial. To see Utayemon and his son playing the parts of mother and daughter in a great drama like "Benke" is an experience well worth a month's journey. The father is probably the most idolised actor on the Japanese stage to-day, and when he takes the part of the youthful heroine of a popular play like "Nijushiko," the house (undemonstrative, as a rule, compared to European audiences) resounds with cries of "Nippon ichi" (first in Japan). You will hear the same at Osaka, where Ganjiro is playing—Ganjiro, the idol of the great industrial city of the west—for Japanese playgoers are fervent partisans, and there has always been keen rivalry between the two cities.

By means of an introduction from a personal friend of Utayemon, and by the courtesy of the management, I was privileged to visit the chief performers in their dressing-rooms, and to see something of the actors' life and business behind the scenes. The most striking feature of the stage and all its appurtenances was the scrupulous tidiness and cleanliness of everything and every one connected with it. No sign of the mild disorder, the genial confusion with which the artistic temperament is wont to reveal itself in and about the green-rooms of European theatres; on the contrary, there was a place for everything and everything in its place, from the common wardrobe of the humble supers to the elaborate equipment of the principals' wigmaker's room. And withal an amplitude of elbow-room sufficient to allow a generous measure of privacy. As I sat in Utayemon's dressing-room, I wondered what the principal villain or the leading lady at Drury Lane would think of this dainty boudoir *à l'Orientale*, with its sliding panels and its spotless floor of white matting, its classically chaste decoration of flowers and *kakemono* appropriate to the season, and its beautiful little shrine in a secluded alcove, where father and son invoke their kindly gods and offer their thanksgiving for success. On the wall, opposite the shrine, in a long row, were the black envelopes in

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which the management conveys its congratulations and a little gift to each "star" to commemorate a "house full" performance. (Every member of the company receives one of these graceful mementos; for the lesser lights it takes the form of a "red letter" enclosing a five *sen* piece.) While I sat and talked to Utayemon, Fukusuke was having a new wig tried on by one of the soft-footed dressers; very pleasant and touching it was to see the father's unaffected pride in his already-famous son, and the latter's deferential courtesy.

An exacting business is the profession of the Onnagata, entailing, as it does, the unceasing effort of a voice high-pitched and artificially strained. Utayemon, like many other female impersonators, suffers from a mild form of paralysis or numbness of the limbs, brought about by the use of arsenical white paint, lavishly applied to produce the necessary female pallor. But considering his age, he bears his years of strenuous work very lightly, preserving a youthful vivacity of mind that seems to defy the hand of Time. He has the keen, mobile features, the gracefully eloquent movements of the unmistakable born actor; temperate in his habits, intensely serious in his profession, addicted in his hours of leisure to painting and music, he displays in conversation a philosophic dignity, combined with genial humour, which reminded me of the elder Guitry.

Most of the leading actors in Japan, as in other countries, are lavish with their money and given to extravagant display; most of them, by common report, are heavily in debt. By the same report Utayemon is the one exception to the rule, avoiding the notoriety conferred by the fashionable intelligence columns of the Tokyo Press. The etiquette which obtains in the dramatic profession all over the world, whereby the amount of a player's remuneration remains a confidential matter between him (or her) and the management, prevails also in Japan, so that it is difficult to speak positively as to the salaries earned by the stars of the Tokyo stage, but in the case

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of Utayemon, admittedly the best paid, it appears to be generally understood that he receives ten thousand *yen* (say £1200) a month. As a full house at the Kabuki, according to the Manager, means about five thousand *yen*, this seems a high figure. But there are Chinese comedians playing in the big native theatres at Shanghai who draw higher salaries than this.

The custom of Japanese theatres is to give their performances continuously for twenty-five days in each month, and to close for the other five or six days. When a company has done its nine or ten hours a day (they also serve who only stand and wait) for twenty-five days, it has well earned a rest. It is in this holiday season at the end of each month that the prodigals of the profession play ducks and drakes with their money, repaying by sumptuous entertainments the generosity of their special patrons and the zealous devotion of their Geisha admirers. It is often a case of *Do ut des*. Every popular actor has his own following of faithful admirers, and a Geisha whose society is much sought after in the world of "big business" or high politics can do a great deal for the object of her affections by persuading her "narikin" friends to give theatre parties in his honour. A Japanese actor's pay is generally dependent upon his popularity, and he whose Geisha admirers bring most ticket-buyers to the box office draws salary accordingly. When, in return, the popular favourite invites his patrons to entertainments at fashionable tea-houses, his Geisha friends reap their harvest of golden opportunity. As a native journalist put it, when explaining the intricacies of these sentimental business relations, a "narikin" will spend fabulous sums to win from a famous Geisha even that "semblance of affection" which makes him the talk of the town and a conspicuous figure in Tokyo's Vanity Fair. Many stage-struck Geishas wear the crests of their favourite actors on their kimonos and handkerchiefs—a form of hero-worship which is not confined to the professional entertainers. On the upper floor of the

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

THEATRE STREET IN KYOTO.

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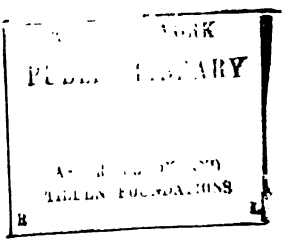
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theatre, near the restaurant, there are a number of little shops and booths, where various kinds of "fairings" and souvenirs are to be bought—pouches, photographs, handkerchiefs, and hair ornaments—all bearing the crest of one or other of the chief actors; these do a roaring trade with the sentimental and susceptible young ladies of the bourgeoisie. My friend the native journalist aforesaid, moralising on these matters, delivered himself of one of those quaintly platitudinous truths in which his class delights. "An actor's wife," he said, "must have much social cleverness. She must be broad-minded, of equable temper, and never jealous." Even so.

As compared with the drama in other lands, a popular play in Japan calls for a good deal of bloodletting. The public insists on scenes that will make its flesh creep, and as it does not creep too easily, the agony has to be long-drawn-out and emphasised with much gruesome and highly realistic detail. In the three plays which we saw at the Kabuki, there were three killings and two blood-curdling cases of hara-kiri, and in the latter the victims took an unconscionable time in dying. Most of these popular dramas are tales of old Japan, illustrating and exalting the glories of the ancient Samurai, the virtues of filial piety, of Spartan courage, and unquestioning loyalty to the feudal lord. Others are founded on some of the innumerable legends, with which Japanese literature abounds, that deal with the supernatural and the weird—tales of ghosts and goblins, of fox-wives, witches, and other ghostly visitants. In the production of the atmosphere of uncanny illusion necessary to make such plays effective, Japanese stagecraft has attained to a wonderful perfection; music, scenery, and acting are all so artistically combined to create a subtly convincing background, that the weirdest of weird tales becomes easily credible. I do not remember to have experienced in any European theatre anything like the sense of convincing illusion as that produced by the presentation of the ghost of a murdered wife in one of these plays at

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the Kabuki. It was illusion of the elemental yet effective kind devised by Bottom the Weaver for the presentation of Moonshine and Thisbe's wall, produced by the creation of a receptive state of mind in the audience, rather than by elaboration of stage properties and effects. It requires illusion of no ordinary kind to induce unconscious acceptance of the convention that an able-bodied super is invisible because he is dressed in black. But as a matter of fact the audience does overlook his presence on the stage, or accepts it as part of the natural order of things supernatural, even when one of these sable-robed mutes comes on, in the middle of a most intensely tragic scene, and helps the expiring heroine to die gracefully by putting a cushion under her neck. I remember long ago a performance in which the great Danjuro was bidding farewell to his native shores from the stern of a swift-sailing boat. The illusion of movement was produced partly by a fast-revolving back cloth and partly by supers rocking the boat fore and aft from the depths of a canvas sea. In the midst of Danjuro's most impassioned speech, one of the waves beneath him burst, exposing a coolie's head and shoulders; but so far as the audience was concerned, the thing might never have happened. There was certainly no laughter.

On the Japanese stage, music plays a very important part in leading the audience to that state of mind which dwells willingly in the haunted house of Illusion. As in the art of the scene-painter, many of its results are produced by the help of time-honoured conventions, with which every Japanese is familiar and whose very ancientry makes them the more effective. For certain plays—notably those which deal with the weird and unearthly—the musicians are concealed behind a bamboo screen in the box on the left front of the stage; for others they sit on a platform at the front of the box, and when thus visible, wear their old costumes of Daimio days. Their part in a performance often resembles that of the chorus in a Greek play. In many effective scenes of

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the national classical drama, part of the tale is told in a high-pitched recitative (like that of Europe's troubadours) by one of the musicians, whilst the actor illustrates the story in dumb show; the whole is punctuated by single notes of the *samisen*, strangely appropriate and significant. Or again, the actor tells the story, into which at intervals the *samisen* interpolates its impressive keynote. All the music used by these players at the Kabuki has been handed down, unwritten, from one generation to another, and the work of the *samisen* player and singers is occasionally supplemented by very telling effects of drums and bells off stage. Fully to appreciate their artistic significance one must understand something of the inevitable association of ideas which they evoke in the mind of the audience. One must know, for example, that just as the willow design, applied to a decorative scheme, is conventionally associated in the Japanese mind with the coming of ghosts, so certain solo notes on the flute convey the idea of impending doom, and a single note of a temple bell implies the very presence of Death.

In every land the mind of the masses is readily hypnotised by suggestions based on deep-rooted conventions and superstitions, but nowhere has knowledge of this truth been so skilfully adapted to the purposes of stagecraft as in Japan.

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# CHAPTER XIV

## A DAY IN SEOUL

PRE-EMINENTLY amongst the cities of the ancient East Seoul is a sermon in stones, which the stranger within its gates may read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest I know of none which teaches more forcibly the old, old lesson of the sins of the fathers, or which suggests such inevitable reflections concerning the mysterious forces that form the character and mould the destinies of nations. The Imperial City at Peking tells its own impressive tale of splendid isolation and departed greatness, but China is still mistress in her own house, and though her present state political be rotten, it does not carry the same conviction of utter helplessness, of dignity pathetic in irretrievable adversity, as that which impresses itself upon one in Korea. There is something in the very sadness and silence of this white-robed race of passive resisters, something in the stoic dignity of their monuments and men, which compels our instinctive sympathy and respect; and yet, when all is said and done, the problem of self-determination for Korea remains, humanly speaking, as far removed from solution as the federation of the world and the brotherhood of man.

Chaperoned by the courteous secretary of the South Manchurian Railway (a kindly soul, addicted to scholarly researches in orthodox Buddhism), I saw the sights of modern Seoul and compared it in my mind with the city as I knew it long ago, before Japan had forced China to abandon her suzerainty over the Hermit Kingdom, and again later, before the Russo-Japanese War, when the Korean King assumed the title of Emperor, and, for a breathing-space of ten years, the country was free to manage its own affairs. I remembered how, in 1898,



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IN THE OLD PALACE ENCLOSURE, SEOUL.

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KOREAN GIRLS AT A JAPANESE SCHOOL IN SEOUL.

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the people had demonstrated their discontent with their own rulers, sitting silent in their thousands before the Palace day and night for fourteen days. I remembered, too, that when Japan fought, first China and then Russia, for supremacy in the peninsula, the attitude of these dogged conscientious objectors was ever that of unconcerned spectators. Remembering these things, one understands something of the nature of the tragedy of Korea, the pitiful destiny of a people too proud to fight, whose home is the strategic keyland of North-Eastern Asia, and a predestined bone of contention between the Powers that struggle for the mastery of the Pacific.

As I stood in the great Audience Hall of the old Palace, untenanted now and open to the winds of heaven, yet splendid in decay, and called to mind the history of this people since those far-off days when Korea aspired to lead the East in art and learning; as I looked out upon the triumphs of incongruous modernity with which Japan has decked the hill-girt city (her banks and barracks, her hospitals and huge hotels), dominating, like alien giants, the clustering hovels of the native-born, it seemed to me that this empty Audience Hall fittingly typified the last scene in a drama of inevitable destiny.

They showed me the "Government General Museum," housed in the ancient and venerable precincts of the Palace; also the delectable pleasaunce and rustic retreat which has been set apart for the use and behoof of Prince Yi, further consoled for the loss of his Throne by a lieutenancy in the Japanese Army and the hand of a beautiful Japanese Princess. I saw the preparations for His Highness's wedding (that ill-omened marriage [1] of which the people speak in whispers)—furniture and embroidery and bowls of silver being made by native workers under the direction of Japanese craftsmen. They showed me model schools, where Korean boys and girls are being taught to look upon Japan as their spiritual

[1] It has since taken place, "according to plan," and judging by Press reports, husband and wife are doing well.



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home, and many other cogwheels in the ingeniously devised machinery of assimilation. But in all the highways and byways of the city I saw evidence of the dogged conservatism of the race, and proof of the fact, which the Japanese themselves are beginning to appreciate, that this very policy of assimilation has breathed a new spirit of life into the passive resistance of the Koreans and aroused in them a strong, though still non-combatant, ardour of nationalism. They may bow to the presence of the alien invader, they may even admit that his progressive administration has increased the material prosperity of their country, but they firmly decline to admit the superiority of Japan's intellectual and moral culture, they refuse to be assimilated, and their refusal has assumed the force of a conscious national movement. The problem of Korea, you perceive, is very similar to the problem of Ireland.

Despite its recent trials and tribulations, despite the strong hand of a ruler that respects neither topknots nor tutelary gods, old Seoul still preserves the philosophic dignity which is the birthright of the Land of the Morning Calm. Here, as elsewhere in the East, one may note the disastrous results of putting new wine into old bottles; uncouth new clothes and unpleasant new manners, imported from the West, strike the same discordant note in Seoul as they do in Tokyo and Peking. But these things are exotic and transient; they have no roots in the real life of the nation. The soul of the Korean people, like that of the Chinese, stands steadfast in the ancient ways, deep-rooted in its own ancestral beliefs, and contrives withal to preserve a certain stoic kind of geniality. It is a race of husbandmen that has eaten too often of the bread of affliction to allow itself to be provoked to desperation. It is, no doubt, often slothful in business, over-prone to politics and plottings, much given to strong drink; but you have only to observe the placidly-determined faces of these straight-backed men—especially the elders of the people—

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and their confident gait, to realise that here still waters run deep. And it is not only on the faces of the men that you discern something of the difficulty of the problem which Japan has to solve in Korea; as a passive resister, the female of the species is more deadly than the male. I caught a glimpse of this truth, subtle and significant, at a private performance of Korean Geisha given by my Japanese hosts.

It was after an informal dinner at the residence of the Civil Governor, Dr. Midzuno, that one of his secretaries (possibly realising that the thread of our political conversation was wearing rather thin) suggested a visit to the Taisho Kemba, a high-class Geisha entertainment under Japanese management or "control." Never having seen Korean Geishas dance, I welcomed the opportunity; and so we left unsolved the problems of militarism in high places, of self-determination and the League of Nations, and speedily found ourselves driving in His Excellency's comfortable motor-car through the silent streets of old Seoul. We alighted at the entrance to a narrow alleyway, running darkly between mud huts, that brought to mind the purlieus of the old Chien Men quarter in the shadow of the city wall at Peking.

There was something furtive, almost sinister, in this approach to a reputed shrine of Korean musical and dramatic culture: not a light shone, not a voice sounded from any of the squalid houses past which we groped our way. We, too, moved silently, for the snow lay deep between these close-built walls. Finally, turning the corner of a house which, in the darkness, looked like all the rest, we came to a door over which a flickering lantern hung; here our guide knocked, a bolt was drawn, and we passed from the bitterly cold night into a long, narrow room, furnished at one end with charcoal braziers and chairs for the audience, and as to the rest, fitted for the dance with soft, clean matting and sl ding panels *à la Japonaise.*

The honours were done by the Japanese manager or

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*impresario* of the Geisha administration; except the performers and two attendants, no Koreans were present. There were six dancers, girls still in their teens, said to be the fine flower of Seoul geishadom. They wore the elaborate headgear, the quaintly stiff but comely costumes of old Korea—high-girdled waists and voluminous, many-coloured skirts—and they danced slow and stately measures, with flawless precision, to the sound of *samisen* and drum, dances intended to symbolise either the poetry of Nature or some episode of legendary romance. Their conventionally painted faces, like those of all Oriental dancers, were as masks, all cast in the same mould of sphinx-like inscrutability, but as women they lacked the little airs and graces, the butterfly daintiness and spontaneous gaiety of the Japanese singing-girl. Indeed, as entertainers, they were distinctly heavy, and when, between the dances, they came, as in duty bound, to chat with their guests and drink a cup of *saké*, they did it perfunctorily and with a courtesy so studied that it became oppressive. Not theirs the bird-like chatter and light-hearted laughter with which the geisha of Tokyo entertain their guests.

Our friend the secretary ascribed the solemnity of the proceedings to the reticent stolidity which is natural to the Koreans, but to me it seemed—and I saw several incidents and gestures to confirm the impression—that these daughters of the Land of the Morning Calm were not so much on their dignity as on the defensive, and that behind these inscrutable masks there lurked the soul of a race whose patriotism drinks deep at the well of memories and dreams. As we walked back to the most sumptuous hotel in the Far East (a very fine piece of window-dressing) I asked one of our hosts if these women never smiled? "Oh, I think so," he replied, "but not so much with strangers."

It will take some time and tact, methinks, to assimilate a people whose dancing-girls decline to smile for the invader.

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## CHAPTER XV

### SHANGHAI

He who returns to the East after a long absence should find something of the freshness and keenness of his first impressions, enhanced by an improved sense of proportion and relative values. Long residence in China is apt, I think, to make one take for granted many beautiful and satisfying things. Familiarity, and the cares that infest the day, combine to dim one's sense of the philosophic dignity inherent in all the East's conception of life and death and in its time-defying institutions. The thorns that spring up conceal from us the splendid proportions, the enduring strength, of that which, say what we will, is by far the noblest monument of human wisdom that has come down to us from the wreck-strewn past. Amidst the clamour of the money-changers and the nostrum vendors of the Treaty Ports, where East and West alike forget the things that matter in their swift pursuit of gain, one often loses sight of the profound significance of China's moral civilisation. Amidst the froth and foam of the breakers, we forget the deep, unruffled spaces of the sea. And because of our restlessness and the haunting memory of our Western birthright, we often depreciate, when we live amongst them, the thoughts and ways of these old-world children of the East. But when one has left China behind for some years, and dwelt in the market-places of the West's triumphant civilisation, when one has seen that civilisation reduced to a welter of scientific slaughter and red ruin, one begins to perceive far more clearly than before, the value of that system of moral philosophy which is the very breath of life to the Chinese, and which has



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preserved this ancient race, if not from attack, at least from disruption. One is then perforce compelled to face the question whether, as the world stands to-day, it is not an impertinence and a waste of time for us to continue to urge the Chinese to forsake the teachings of their Sages and to believe in the moral superiority of a system which ends in Armageddon? And when one returns to China, and finds this patient people, a quarter of the earth's inhabitants, pursuing its steadfast way along the lines prescribed by centuries of experience and immemorial tradition, and achieving, in spite of new perplexities and perils, a degree of stability which Europe may well envy, one comes to regard the East's non-militant type of civilisation in a new light and its results in clearer perspective.

There can be, I think, no escape from the conclusion that, in the broad conception of life, and in the social and political systems which arise out of that conception, "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." Between the creative ideas of East and West there lies a gulf of elemental difference, which neither Time nor any tide in the affairs of men can bridge. Considering Asia and its philosophy as a whole, disregarding its intellectual half-breeds (those brilliant dragon-flies of a brief day, that flit erratically across the depths of national life), we may confidently ascribe this difference to the hold which the patriarchal family system of morals and politics has acquired over the race-mind of the East, and to the peculiar virtues and defects produced in the masses by that system. But let the fundamental causes of that difference be what they may, deep-buried in the past, its general result has been to produce in the Asiatic mind a deep reverence for the absolute and the universal, which revolts instinctively from the materialism of the West. *Ex Oriente lux.* It is not for nothing that from the East has come every religion which has elevated and comforted the hearts of men, for the East has always held firmly to the belief

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that the means of existence are less important than its ends. The masses of the people in China and Japan are unconsciously nearer to the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount than many of the Christian communities in Europe and America which subscribe to send missionaries to the East. Can any one deny that the forceful individualism, upon which are based the social progress and material prosperity of Europe and America, is morally inferior to the family system of Asia, in which the interests of the individual are sacrificed to those of the community? It is the birthright and the instinct of the Anglo-Saxon to respect an active, self-helping race and to despise the passive non-resister; but from the Asiatic point of view, it is not only a text, but an absolute truth, that the meek shall inherit the earth. Your Chinese educated in Mission Schools may wear a top-hat and profess to admire our many inventions, but the attitude of the East as a whole towards our material civilisation is just as disdainful to-day as it was in the days of the Great Mogul. As for me, returning to the East from lands wherein all our triumphs of mechanical ingenuity have been turned to purposes of manslaughter, I find myself more than ever compelled to accept and respect the Oriental conception of life—that attitude, founded on the wisdom of the ancients, which has given to their form of civilisation a stability and harmony such as our modern world has never known. The philosophy of the Chinese is the birthright, not of an intellectual *élite* (as with us), but of the race; it has taught them that even wealth is only a means to a rational end, that the secret of human happiness lies rather in being than doing, and that, in this unsubstantial pageant of illusions, the spirit is more than the flesh. Thus regarded, all the fitful fever of Europe's social system, all the triumphs of our industrial organisation, are but the dead sea fruits of purblind error. From the Eastern point of view,

> "The world is too much with us; late and soon,
> Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers,"

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and a civilisation which leaves neither time nor place for meditation, stands, by that very fact, condemned. Despite the burden of physical suffering, the hunger and the squalor imposed upon countless millions of Asiatics by their passivity, and by the intensity of the struggle for survival, accentuated by their procreative recklessness, I hold that the East is wiser and better than the West. I believe that the social institutions which have grown out of the Chinese philosophy are nearer to the truth, and therefore morally superior to our own; and, believing this, I ask myself upon what grounds, and to what purpose, do we persist in endeavouring to impose upon them, not only our mechanical inventions, but our political panaceas and our conflicting creeds?

Shanghai inevitably suggests some such train of thought, because here, within the narrow boundaries of the Treaty Port, East and West have met on neutral ground and held close converse together for seventy years; yet, in all things that are essential to human intercourse, they remain worlds apart. Some 800,000 Chinese have their being within the borders of the Model Settlement, living for and on the trade which has brought together 20,000 white men and Japanese at the Yangtsze's great distributing centre. A large proportion of these Chinese are humble workers, artisans and coolies from Kiangpei, who come in their thousands to eat of the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table. All around and about the lordly mansions of the foreign trader, that line the banks of the Whangpoo, and within a stone's-throw of the splendid villas of the suburbs, the tide of native life flows on, practically untouched in its ancestral ways by all the words and works of the stranger. If, by some miracle, every foreigner could be suddenly transported from China to-morrow, their going would have no more effect upon the inner life of this people than a tree feels when the birds leave its branches. They would pass, like other unaccountable phenomena, and leave not a trace behind.

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

A QUAINT LITTLE MONSTER, SHANGHAI, 1920.

*B. T. Prideaux*]

MODES AND FASHIONS, SHANGHAI.

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Over the place where they had been, the tide of the nation's life would flow, unchanging and unchanged, and soon their very memory would be forgotten. In the back streets of the Settlements at Shanghai, the spiritual aloofness of the Chinese race impresses itself just as forcibly as in the remotest city of the interior.

But there is something which impresses itself even more than this aloofness of the mind of the East, upon the traveller who returns to China after an absence of years, and that is the charm (almost biblical in its old-world quality) which lies in the philosophic serenity, the sterling faithfulness, and the sober efficiency of the race. Dynasties may pass, the legions thunder by, but in the finely-tempered soul of this people these things abide, and their savour is a fragrance of which the heirs of all the ages know nothing. Where, in all our bustling, hustling market-places, will you find anything to compare with the equal-minded fortitude, the kindliness, the almost dog-like fidelity of the Chinese, those simple virtues, fruits of the Sages' ancient tree of Knowledge, which have made him the most lovable, and perhaps the most admirable, of human beings? Fully to appreciate the character of humanity's primordial elder brother, one must have left the East awhile, gone back to the restless sources of our "Western learning," heard Bolshevism howling at the gates, and realised the cumulative effects of our creed of individualism upon the mind of the masses. Thereafter, China, with all its revolutions and economic distress, seems like a weather-beaten rock of sense and stability in a world of unrest, and the greetings of one's old friends (teachers, traders, and servants) come like some strain of homely music, half-forgotten. What have we to offer to the Chinese that shall serve them better than the virtues that are theirs? Shall we lure them from their fields to our factories for the speeding up of trade? With Christian Europe in the melting-pot, shall we tell them that Christianity will cure the thousand natural ills that flesh is heir to? No doubt but that we

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shall do these things and continue to call them progress; but let us not hope, in the doing of them, to convince the East of our moral or intellectual superiority.

To return to the places where the best years of one's life have been spent, to be a transient spectator where once one played even a small part upon the stage, must always be a heart-stirring adventure, fraught with a gentle melancholy of retrospection, half pleasure and half pain. The pain predominates when, amidst the whispering ghosts of the years that are gone, one seeks in vain for the old familiar places, where only a few surviving landmarks greet one, like old friends in a strange land. The changes which the hand of man has wrought in and about the Foreign Settlements of Shanghai during the past ten years, have been as many and as great as those of any mushroom Eldorado of the new world, so that the *revenant* in search of old haunts, wanders here like a pelican in the wilderness. On all sides the triumphs of commerce-in-the-grand-manner confront him, imposing manifestations and appliances of noise and haste to the business of barter, more suggestive of Chicago than of the easy-going Shanghai of bygone days. It is as if Aladdin had persuaded every citizen to change his old lamps for new, his ricksha for a motor-car, and henceforth to live in a fever of trans-Atlantic hustle and bustle. All over the East, the traveller of to-day will find portents and proofs of a world of change, but nowhere such a transfiguration, such breathless haste and hunger for new things, such a clean sweep of old signposts, as in the foreign community of Shanghai. Tientsin and Canton, for all their new traffics and discoveries, still preserve the essential features of their youth. Yokohama, by comparison, stands unchanged and rooted in her ancient ways. From the purely commercial point of view, there may be matter for regret in such a state of suspended animation, but it has its sentimental and æsthetic compensations. True, one feels in the Treaty Ports of Japan that the alien intruder is here on sufferance only, that his

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tide of peaceful penetration is on the ebb, and that there is a sense of suppressed irritation in the air; nevertheless, I confess to a subtle satisfaction in finding so many ancient landmarks standing where they stood of old. Indeed, the Yokohama Bund and the approaches to the Bluff give one at first sight a queer Rip van Winkle feeling, so little changed are they from the scene which greeted the traveller on landing here thirty years ago. And men still seem to move here, as of old, with the leisurely dignity that marked the merchant princes of the 'eighties, their daily lives bounded by tranquil offices, the race-course, and the restful Club, their outer world limited to Tokyo and Kobe, Miyanoshita and Kamakura. The unpainted junks that move upon the dancing waters of the bay, the little Japanese shops that cling and cluster along the steep road which winds up to the Bluff, the silk stores and curio shops of the Benten-doré—all seem blissfully unconscious of the hand of Time, unmoved by the clamour that reverberates from Tokyo and Osaka. And over them all Fujiyama, the peerless, towers in serenity unshaken.

The causes of Yokohama's comparative immutability and of Shanghai's swift-moving development lie so obviously in the conditions under which the Western trader exists in Japan and China respectively, that they call for little explanation. Both these Treaty Ports are, of their origin, exotic growths, excrescences grafted by force of arms upon the native tree of trade. Japan, being wise in her generation, and having diligently acquired the Western science of man-killing by machinery, has thrown off the shackles of extra-territoriality; and the stranger within her gates has never been quite comfortable since. But for China, with her patriarchial system and atavistic resistance to change, such an effort was impossible, and with the passing years, as her weakness increased with the crafts and assaults of the earth-hungry Powers, Shanghai has become, not only the stronghold of the extra-territorialised trader, but the

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favourite residence and safety-vault of Chinese officials *en retraite* and a very Cave of Adullam for political refugees and plotters of every description. Under such conditions, it was inevitable that the city should wax fat and kick; that the little self-governing community of foreign merchants, exempt from all laws and taxation, save those of their own making and their Taiping-days Charter, should grow into a great Free Town, richer by far than any of the Hanseatic League. The Shanghai of to-day is, in fact, a little State, an *imperium in imperio* administered by its Council elected by the foreign Land-renters, in which close upon a million Chinese enjoy the benefits of law and order (but no votes) in return for a modest rate of taxation. All the nations and kindreds of the earth have foregathered here, with fifteen Consuls flying fifteen flags, and each takes its part, *tant bien que mal*, in the affairs of the Settlement. It is a League of Nations, *in parvo*, which has stood the test of time, building up its administration by gradual process of precedents, and held together by the effective bond of a common interest in the development and protection of trade. As an object lesson of the federation of the world on a small scale, the Model Settlement of Shanghai deserves more attention than it has yet received from political economists. When that object lesson is studied, it will be observed that the foundations upon which the success of the experiment has rested, differ in one very important respect from those upon which Mr. President Wilson and Lord Robert Cecil have proposed to build their League of Nations. The success of international co-operation at Shanghai has been brought about by the fact that, because the British Land-renters have always been in a considerable majority, the control of the administration has been automatically vested in British hands; the little State has thus enjoyed the benefits of a continuous policy and a recognised directing authority. If the day ever comes—and the Japanese are moving heaven and earth to attain it—when the control of the administration

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becomes a bone of contention between seriously divided national factions, the doom of the Model Settlement is sealed. The ideal of the League of Nations, based on a community of sentiment, may be admirable in theory, but its successful application involves the necessity of recognition by all concerned of a common interest and an authoritative executive. It is on the rock of imaginary equal rights that the good ship Utopia goes to pieces.

Meanwhile Shanghai, having 1100 British voters on its Land-renters' list, as against 300 Japanese, 230 Americans, and 150 Germans, still steers its prosperous course, unperturbed by the distant thunder of a world distraught, or the clouds of political strife that gather on the near horizon. How prosperous that course has been since 1913, he who runs may see; evidence of wealth, increasing and prolific, abounds on every side, from the teeming activity of wharves, warehouses, and factories, to the Capuan villas of the Bubbling Well. And the ease with which money has been made, both by merchants and mandarins, is reflected in the monstrous cost of living and in a degree of luxury in some respects unequalled either in New York or Buenos Aires. I have seen something of the stupendous wealth of both these cities during and since the war; I have walked their streets and dwelt in their hotels, wondering, like a poor relation, at the princeliness of their pomps and vanities, the lavishness of their resplendent lives; but in the matter of mellow creature comforts, of savoury fleshpots deftly served, no Crœsus of America, North or South, can ever hope to attain to the comfortable heights and depths that Shanghai takes for granted, because not all his wealth can buy the swift, soft-footed service, the ubiquitous efficiency of the Chinese house-boy, gardener, or cook. And neither Fifth Avenue nor the Calle Florida treat the dollar with quite the same splendid insouciance as does Shanghai's Nanking Road. When, last year, the exchange of the Mexican stood at about six shillings, Shanghai spent it in the same cheerful spirit as when it was worth two.

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Converted into sterling, salaries and prices in the gorgeous East verged on the ludicrous, and for the passing stranger, the disastrous. To pay the equivalent of £3 a day for the meagrest of hotel accommodation; 24*s.* an hour for the hire of a Ford car; 4*s.* 6*d.* for having one's hair cut, and 1*s.* 2*d.* for the daily paper, is to fill one with something more than respect for the Orient.

It was, of course, to be expected that with the development of railways opening up the interior, strategic trade centres like Shanghai and Hankow would grow and flourish exceedingly. But something more than an ordinary expansion of commerce was needed to produce the exuberant prosperity and modernity of present-day Shanghai. The vast profits of five years of war trade, practically untaxed, accounted for a good deal, and the hoarded wealth brought into the safe refuge of the Settlement by retired Chinese and Manchu officials since the upheaval of the Revolution, provided much new grist for the local mills of trade. The results, in any case, are astonishing, and not the least remarkable feature of the swiftly-changing scene is the American air of get-rich-quick, which has come to prevail in this most cosmopolitan of all communities. The teeming tide of life which flowed along the Maloo ten years ago was a gently meandering stream, compared with the turbulent torrent of to-day. Looking back on the even tenor of existence in those days, the present kaleidoscopic activities of the community seem incredibly remote from their serenity; it is the difference between a vicar's garden-party and a race meeting. During and since the war, there has been, naturally enough, a new, and by no means inconsiderable, invasion of China by American firms and American ideas; also the increasing number of Chinese students educated in the States was bound to produce its first and most conspicuous effects in the Settlements, which have ever been Young China's headquarters and chief stamping-ground. Nevertheless, compared to the whole foreign community, the number of Americans in Shanghai,

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missionaries included, has not been enough to leaven the whole lump. Rather it would seem that similar economic conditions have produced similar results in Shanghai and Chicago. The gods have dropped the bait of opportunity into the pool of enterprise, and the fishes dart hither and thither in a restless commotion of competition.

Here and there, above the tumultuous tide of change, a few old landmarks stand out and bring to mind the easy-going past—the Cathedral and the Custom House, the Lyceum Theatre and Country Club, the Joss-house at the Bubbling Well, the goodly messuage of the British Consulate, and the Race-course (once on the outskirts, now at the very heart of the Settlement), a perennial monument to the foresight of the first City Fathers. Even on the Bund, amidst the turmoil of tramcars, motors, and lorries, there are sights and sounds that recall the Shanghai of early days: the mustering of brokers' victorias at the Bank—owners, mafoos and ponies, just as they were years and years ago, and all serenely unconscious of being an anachronism; the rhythmic chant of swift-moving coolies, unloading cargo at the jetties; the never-ceasing song of native labour; wheelbarrow coolies staggering under their monstrous burdens. And on the river, the old familiar vision of junks and sampans innumerable, blue sails and brown, and twirling yuloh blades, the moving homes of men whose lives are as the lives of their forefathers were in the old time before them, and as the lives of their sons will be, when we are all forgotten. These glimpses and voices from the dense background of purely native life, these swift intimations of its pitiless struggle for sheer survival, seem to me full of a deeper significance than all the glamour and glitter of Shanghai's exotic modernity. As I watch the human pageant, the social activities of Mrs. Compradore Wang, driving in her Rolls-Royce to her villa in the Western District, or those of Mrs. Rosenkrantz, who takes her to the play at the Lyceum, count for less than these half-naked coolies singing at their work. For these ladies

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are at best but transient phenomena, froth on the crest of a wave; but the humble sons of Han are as they have been since the days of Babylon, and as they will be when Europe's present frontiers are wiped out, a great tide of the ocean of human life, mysterious and profound.

When one reflects upon the present state and probable future of industrialism in Europe and America, the ant-like capacity of the Chinese for monotonous labour assumes a new significance. Not only does it explain most of the rapid growth of Shanghai, but it brings before us, much nearer than of old, the vision of the only real Yellow Peril, the competitive results of this mass of unsophisticated cheap labour upon countless workshops and factories overseas. Here, before our eyes, are the beginning of a new phase and new consequences of economic pressure, unmistakable evidences of the fact that Capital is beginning to perceive the value of this vast reservoir of efficient, easily-contented workers, and is making ready to use it. Already Captains of industry—Americans, British, Germans, and Japanese (especially Japanese)—are hastening to map out the ground, selecting coigns of vantage all over the country, for the organisation and application of all this dynamic energy to the development of manufactures; and this assuredly is only the thin end of a wedge which must eventually move the whole fabric of international trade. Assuming that industrial enterprise can be organised in China under conditions which shall secure the co-operation of Chinese capital and the support of Chinese officialdom, it will be as impossible for any European or American industry to face its competition in any open market, as it is for the white countries to admit Asiatic immigration.

It is not only the foreigner who perceives the possibilities of the situation brought about in the East by the war of Labour against Capital in the West; the Chinese are fully alive to them. They are also well aware of the fact that, so long as the foreigner's factories are confined within the narrow limits of the Treaty Ports, until he can

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secure the free use of land and labour in close proximity to the chief sources of raw materials, there can be no rapid development of enterprise on the grand scale of which the Americans talk. As in the past, they will undoubtedly resist, with all the effective weight of their inertia and powers of obstruction, any attempt by the foreigner to exploit China's raw materials and cheap labour for his own exclusive benefit. But there appears to be a very definite disposition in their high places to entertain proposals for co-operative enterprise, of a kind which will give Chinese officialdom an equal share of profits and a fair share of "face," in return for the privilege of trading and manufacturing rights in the interior. Unless the present omens are misleading, we are likely to hear a good deal in the near future of Anglo-Chinese joint enterprises.

There exists a certain group of Cantonese *intransigeants*, it is true, who proclaim the readiness and the ability of the Chinese to handle highly-organised industrial business without the help of foreign capital or foreign technical experts, and who therefore denounce the co-operative idea. They cite the success of purely Chinese companies, such as the Nanyang Tobacco Company, or Wing On's new department stores, as evidence in support of their contention, and they point to the great businesses that have been built up by Chinese merchant princes in Hong Kong and Java, in the Straits and the South Seas. The question thus raised is extremely interesting and a little delicate. It is evident that if, without assistance, the Chinese can provide efficient and reliable administration for the development of native industries, they can eat up their competitors at their leisure and be perfectly justified in so doing. In that case, the *raison d'être* of half the Europeans in China would cease to exist, and the Treaty Ports would soon become the diminished homes of petty commission agents and disgruntled shippers. But is it possible? Of the intelligence and business capacity of the Chinese merchant, there can be no question;



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yet the fact remains that there has never been a case in China of a public company successfully handled by Chinese for Chinese. There is all the difference in the world between a Chinese merchant conducting his personal or family business, and the same man acting as director of a railway or mining company; the great names made by Chinese merchant-adventurers in the South have always been associated with family concerns, and the same is generally true of modern enterprises, such as Wing On's, where the initiative comes from Chinese educated abroad. There is also a wide difference between the position of a Chinese business conducted in a British Colony, or even in the No Man's Land of a Treaty Port, and one which has to work out its own salvation in some inland province of China, exposed to the rapacity of local officials and the bigoted conservatism of the gentry. When all is said and done, the fact remains that, although there is probably more hoarded wealth in China to-day than ever before, none of its owners—be they merchants or mandarins—display any inclination to invest it either in Government loans or in purely Chinese companies under official auspices. At the same time, many of the richest and ablest men in the country are prepared to put money into co-operative enterprises, with financial control vested in the foreigner. Money talks.

. . . . . .

Any one who is trying to see the problems of the Far East as a whole, to form a just estimate of the various forces at work beneath the surface, and the probable resultant of their actions and reactions, can hardly fail to be impressed by the intellectual and spiritual detachment of the foreign community of Shanghai from all things Chinese, except those which directly affect the commercial outlook. Even allowing for the fact that here they have no abiding city, there is something passing strange in the earnestness of their concentration on purely local affairs, their complete absorption in trade and sport,

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YOUNG CHINA: MARRIAGE UP TO DATE, SHANGHAI.

A TREATY-PORT LADY OF FASHION, SHANGHAI.

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their cheerful indifference to the language, literature, and institutions of the native-born. And even more remarkable than this aloofness of the foreign colony, is the exotic quality of Young China's political and intellectual activities, always manifested to the sound of trumpets and drums in the Tom Tiddler's ground of the Model Settlement. They loom very large in the world's Press, these activities of the semi-Europeanised product of our Mission schools and Universities overseas, and their reverberating rhetoric evokes many weird echoes in distant lands; nevertheless, their voice is that of the intellectual hybrid of a class which has all the qualities and all the defects of the half-breed, but is without real roots either in China or in Europe. It is a class which, though in some instances its intentions have been excellent, has proved itself to be utterly incapable of originating or directing any practical policy for the good of China.

The foreign merchant at Shanghai, whose contact with Chinese affairs is usually limited to half an hour's chat with his semi-denationalised compradore, may be forgiven for mistaking the cackle of these highly vocal young gentlemen for the murmur of the Chinese world. It is also probably true that the foreign community's collective vanity is rather tickled by appearing before the world as godfather to a movement in which many good, earnest men have discerned the makings of a new heaven and a new earth. But even allowing for all this, and recognising the fact that a busy commercial outpost has not much leisure for philosophy or political economy, I find myself unable to account for the persistence, at this date, of fallacies which were natural enough in the first enthusiasm for the Revolution that overthrew the Manchu dynasty. Generally speaking, it would seem to be due to lack of perspective and sense of proportion; but in a good many instances it would seem that belief in these fallacies has been professed as part of a deliberate policy, intended to provide good fishing in troubled waters

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In certain quarters this policy is obviously inspired by a desire to undermine British preponderance in the local executive government. There are, no doubt, sincere idealists and earnest parlour Bolsheviks who encourage the extremists of Young China militant in such matters as the immediate abolition of extra-territoriality, from perfectly disinterested motives; but as a rule the inspiration of this kind of sympathy may be traced either to the mud-fishers aforesaid, or to the anxiety of some well-paid "adviser" to do something to justify his position, or to the desire of well-meaning busy-bodies to loom large in the public eye.

Young China's record, having reference to the fundamental question of the nation's fitness for representative government, has been discussed elsewhere: for the moment, we are concerned only with the Model Settlement. And here, despite the cumulative evidence of the eight years which have passed since the proclamation of the Republic, the delusion still seems to prevail, even amongst sober business men, that, with the passing of the Monarchy, a sudden and miraculous change has taken place in the structural character of the Chinese people, and that the passive non-resisting type is a thing of the past. In spite of the obvious fact that the so-called "parliamentarians" have reduced the country, politically speaking, to the level of Mexico or Venezuela, all sorts and conditions of men are ready to assure you, not only at their dinner-tables, but in public meetings assembled, that the Chinese of to-day are a totally different people from those of the last generation; that "things are moving very fast, sir, and we must keep abreast of the times." They will ask you to observe the movement for the emancipation of women, the number and activity of political associations in their midst, the increasing signs of organisation amongst certain sections of Chinese labour, and many other proofs and portents of "progress." It is true that, for the moment, one does not hear quite so much as one did in 1912 of the

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regenerative force of Parliamentary procedure at Peking, or the moral effect of the abolition of opium, because, with three rival Parliaments contesting the field, and opium more plentiful than ever before, it is difficult for the most earnest of visionaries to make the facts of the situation square with the theory of fundamental change. But the vague belief in the increasing political consciousness of the Chinese masses persists, nevertheless, together with a slipshod profession of the fashionable faith in the miraculous benefits which China may expect to derive from "democracy."

I find it hard to account for the persistence of these delusions amongst any but vocational idealists. That the missionaries and school-teachers who are largely responsible for Young China's political activities and aspirations, should still hope to gather rare and refreshing fruit from the tree of their own planting, is natural enough. It is in the nature of the rhapsodist to place his hopes for to-morrow above the experience of a thousand yesterdays, and to attach more importance to the form of a government than to the character of the men who claim to administer it. But the prevalence of this kind of plausible optimism in a business community which, with regard to its own affairs, can never afford to ignore the experience of yesterday, is chiefly due, I think, to the fact that blind faith in "democracy," as a cure for all human ills, has become a fashionable shibboleth all the world over, and this by reason of intellectual laziness, and because the catchwords of our later-day demagogues, their appeal and the secret of their success, are based on sentiment rather than on sense, and on hysteria rather than on history. At Shanghai, in particular, the teachings of history have carried even less weight than elsewhere, because the eloquence and fervour with which Young China proclaimed its discovery of Utopia, to the thumping of innumerable tubs, created a clamour and a series of moving pictures sufficient to disturb most minds, and to prevent them from inquiring whether this Utopia was the

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sort of place in which the Chinese people, as a whole, might find themselves at home. And yet, for those who, amidst the tumult and the shouting, found time to reflect, who remembered the millions of patient, politically-unconscious toilers that made the real China, it must always have been apparent that these "Western-learning" Intellectuals and their "emancipated" women were no more representative of China than, shall we say, the Cantonese communities of Singapore or California? And they must have had their doubts also as to the wisdom of those Catholic liberties of the Foreign Settlements—especially on the French side—which permit conspirators, malcontents, and political refugees of every kind to hatch their plots and load their bombs with impunity. These gentry use the safe shelter of the Municipality for their own sordid ends, and by means of the local vernacular Press attain to a degree of importance which otherwise they could never have achieved. The evil results of this are twofold: firstly, that the profession of political agitator has been made attractively safe; and secondly, that throughout the Treaty Ports there prevails an exaggerated estimate of Young China's political influence and regenerative ideas. I do not mean by this to suggest that new-school politicians, such as Sun Yat-sen or Dr. C. T. Wang, and the ferment which they have produced at home and abroad, are wholly unimportant. The point which I desire to emphasise is, that those observers who discern in this ferment the re-birth of China, and the sudden awakening of the nation to a new sense of political morality, are overlooking not only the instinctive conservatism of the race, but the self-seeking ambitions which have been so powerful a factor in producing this upheaval. No one who knows anything of China to-day can possibly maintain that all the professional politicians' talk of constitutions, parliaments, and democracy evokes any interest, or indeed any response, from the great masses of the people.

There is something pathetically suggestive of the

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intellectual disorder of Young China, and of its inability to grasp the essential spirit of Western civilisation, in the fearful and wonderful garments worn by its emancipated sisters, cousins, and aunts, not to mention those of Delilah and Aspasia, with whom native traditions of decorum naturally count for less than the desire to be conspicuous. The clothes and manners affected by Chinese women of the respectable classes in Shanghai to-day are enough to justify an old-time resident in the belief that Confucius, filial piety, and the patriarchal system have gone with the Monarchy into limbo; that the days of the polygamist, with his docile, secluded women, are done; and that female suffrage is in sight. But, as a matter of fact, the fantastically-apparelled creatures are a purely local and transient manifestation, the product of an abnormal and exotic environment, neither flesh, fish, fowl, nor good red herring. Their hybrid garments and jaunty assumption of foreign customs and manners merely typify the inevitable confusion and unrest of this No Man's Land 'twixt East and West. Take one of these quaint little monsters, with her tam-o'-shanter cap, her woollen muffler, short silk trousers, spats, and high-heeled boots, and put her down in any city of the interior; if she did not speedily run for cover, she would most assuredly be mobbed. Here in Shanghai she may ignore the Sacred Edict with impunity; she can indulge in courtship, and even in marriage, *à l'Americaine;* she may join, unchaperoned, in the afternoon parade of fashion on the Nanking Road; she may take part in political demonstrations, and even address public meetings; but she does these things because she is a product of Shanghai, and Shanghai is not China. In certain ultra-modern circles, led by ruffling blades fresh from American Universities, Chinese ladies have even been known to snatch a fearful joy from turkey-trotting to the sounds of jazz, thereby violating all Oriental ideas of female propriety. Greatly daring, one or two of them have even done it in Peking, and I observe that Sir John Jordan, talking to a London

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reporter, has cited the fact as proof of China's remarkable progress. I note also that the same genial authority referred to their newly-developed interest in politics and women's rights, all of which merely help to make it more and more difficult for the uninitiated to determine the real significance of Shanghai's eccentric shadow-play. As for that enterprising reporter, he must, I think, have caught Sir John unawares, for none knows better than that wise and kindly man that the race-mind of the Chinese hates and fears, more than all else, those encroachments of the West which threaten its instinctive moralities and ancestral proprieties. *Persicos odi, puer, apparatus.*

During the period of my visit to Shanghai, the community, native and foreign, was much exercised over a question which has frequently vexed it in recent years, namely, the right of the Chinese taxpayers to representation on the Municipal Council; in other words, to a share in the direct government of the Settlement. Young China's fervour of excitement and eloquence, and its skilful use of the machinery of intimidation in dealing with the timid shopkeeping class, presented on this occasion no new features. There were the usual telegrams in all directions, the usual manifestoes by all sorts of associations, real and imaginary, the usual passionate assertion of China's sovereign rights, accompanied by threats of strikes and personal denunciations. But, as an example of windy agitation on a trackless sea of sentiment, there was something very significant, not only in Young China's handling of the matter, but in the sympathetic, not to say respectful, reception accorded to their views by officials and influential members of the foreign community. The Chinese claim to representation, based on elementary justice, is morally unanswerable; to deny it is morally impossible, since nine-tenths of the Settlement's revenues are collected from Chinese ratepayers. Unfortunately, however, the existence of the Settlement itself is equally indefensible on broad grounds

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

MILITARISM IN THE MAKING.

*B. T. Prideaux*]

THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES.

(These pictures were taken at a Chinese School in the French Settlement, Shanghai.)

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of justice. It was originally established, and has ever since been maintained, by the law of the stronger, and because Chinese methods of administration could never provide the foreign trader with anything like security for life and property. For that matter, the whole principle of extra-territoriality can only be defended on grounds of political expediency, in themselves unjust. But if extra-territoriality goes, the Foreign Settlement goes also, not only as an object-lesson in efficient administration, but as a sanctuary for Chinese partisans and plotters of the losing side, and a safe hiding-place for the wealth of prudent mandarins. The most astonishing thing about this particular agitation was, that the excitable students with whom it originated should have been supported by the sober-headed Guilds and Chambers of Commerce, for these would be the very first to suffer from the introduction of mandarin methods in Municipal affairs; but moral courage in the face of noisy intimidation has never been a characteristic of the Chinese merchant. Equally astonishing, from the transient spectator's point of view, was the failure of the foreign community's representatives to put Young China firmly in its place; for it should have been self-evident that a claim to give the Chinese seats on the Council, as a matter of equity, and based on their numerical strength, would give them, on the same grounds, a perfect right to absolute control. The obvious course, whereby alone the just claims of the Chinese could be reconciled with the facts of the situation (a course which should have been adopted when the Guilds proposed it in 1906), is for the foreign community to recognise and encourage a Chinese Consultative Committee, elected as the Chinese ratepayers may think fit, to take its advice, whenever feasible, in matters affecting purely Chinese interests, and to give all possible publicity to its representations. The essential need of the situation is machinery for the ventilation of the *bona-fide* grievances of the law-abiding Chinese community. Such grievances undoubtedly exist, but the professional agitator who

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plies his noisome trade under the protection of the Municipality should be forcibly reminded that these grievances are as gossamer on the summer breeze when compared with the burdens borne by those who dwell in Chinese cities—" whose children are far from safety, whose harvest the hungry eateth up, and the robber swalloweth up their substance."

From the point of view of the Chinese Government (if ever it reaches a state of coherence such as shall enable it to maintain one), the protection which the self-governing Settlements of the Treaty Ports afford to political refugees and conspirators, is likely to present a much more serious problem. The asylum found by the " provisional government of the Republic of Korea " in the French Settlement at Shanghai, constitutes a precedent which might easily develop along lines fraught with real danger to the destinies of the Model Settlement. The path of wisdom for the City Fathers, looking to the future, must lie in barring all but purely local politics, and in preventing the Settlement from becoming an Alsatia and a stamping-ground for wild asses.

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# CHAPTER XVI

## NORTHWARD THROUGH SHANTUNG

TWELVE years ago, the highest circles of foreign finance and diplomacy at Peking—following the German lead—professed their genuine belief in the capacity of Chinese officialdom to provide honest and efficient management for the railways then being built, or about to be built, with foreign capital. The terms under which the railway loan agreements for the Tientsin-Pukou, the Hangchow-Ningpo, and other railways were concluded, gave practical effect to this belief. "Pukou terms," as they were called, eliminated from the foreign loans conditions of effective supervision over railway construction and finance, which had hitherto been declared indispensable safeguards for the bondholder. They were, in effect, a declaration of faith in the mandarin, extorted from British and French political finance by the pressure of German competition, and for which Germany received prompt reward from the Viceroy Chang Chih-tung and other mandarins. British officialdom, as is its wont, made a virtue of necessity and followed the line of least resistance to the sound of its own trumpets. "We must put the Chinese on their mettle," wrote an eminent authority, "and hope for the best." But, as a matter of fact, the Chinese were put on to our metal—good pounds English—with results which every disinterested observer knew to be inevitable.

If I thus refer to the pre-war past, it is because, despite the parlous results of these experiments, history seems to be in considerable danger of repeating itself, in the form of further foreign loans for the immediate benefit of the mandarin and the ultimate ruin of China. And if I refer to the present conditions of management



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and traffic on the Tientsin-Pukou line, it is because no one can travel by that railway, with his eyes and ears open, and remain inclined to the belief that Chinese officialdom, either of the young or the old school, is capable of honest administration without an authoritative guiding hand.

To pass from the Shanghai-Nanking railway, on the south bank of the Yangtsze, to the Pukou line on the north, is to pass from comparative efficiency to chaos. Even on the Shanghai line, misplaced sympathy for local ideas of self-determination has seriously curtailed the railway's utility and earning power; with proper warehousing accommodation and rolling stock the carrying capacity might easily be doubled, but the Chinese Managing Directorate prefers the system of small profits and quick returns, and the foreign staff have learned by painful experience that it is foolish to kick against the pricks. The permanent way and rolling stock, however, are maintained in good condition and the passenger traffic is well managed.[1]

The sight which greets the traveller's eye, as he crosses the river to the Pukou terminus of the northern line, is perhaps the most convincing object-lesson in mandarin business methods to be met with in all China. Stretching far up and down the river-bank are vast accumulations of cargo, mostly perishable, awaiting transportation, all unprotected from the weather. Piece goods, yarn, tobacco, and grain of all kinds are stacked in tumultuous confusion, and in the rainy season, when import and export cargo lie miserably marooned in mud, the merchants' losses, for which there is no compensation, are enormous. The profits which the railway has earned in the past should have amply sufficed to build the necessary warehouses

[1] During the year 1920, 7,200,000 passengers travelled on the Shanghai-Nanking Railway and 5,500,000 on the Shanghai-Hangchow line, in each case an increase of about 10 per cent. on the preceding year. Railway officials declare that the systems have practically reached the maximum development possible with their present rolling stock.

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and to provide the line with sufficient rolling stock; but from the outset the railway has been regarded as a milch cow by the officials, civil and military, who have successively controlled it; and to-day it stands, or rather totters, as a melancholy example of hopeless inefficiency. As in the case of the Luhan line, every dollar has gone to satisfy the needs or greed of the mandarin. Freight charges have been raised to the scale of English railways, the third-class passenger rate to two cents a mile for the most primitive kind of transportation. The rolling stock is in a deplorable condition and wholly inadequate to the traffic available. One of the most prominent officials at the capital, long connected with the Ministry of Communications, admitted to me frankly that, under proper management, the earning power of this railway might easily be quadrupled—and the same holds good of other lines—but, he added, it will be necessary to raise another loan to put things right! It was a henchman of this same official, a highly intelligent representative of Young China educated abroad, who, as Managing Director of the railway, became so conspicuous that he was finally impeached and removed from office, only to become Manager of the Bank of Communications at Shanghai. He lately held an influential post in close proximity to the President at Peking. *Ex pede Herculem.*

During the period of acute disorder in the Central Provinces which followed the Revolution of 1911, the southern section of the line—the section built with British capital—was for a considerable time at the mercy of General Chang Hsün, the redoubtable military chieftain of Shantung who, in 1917, achieved notoriety by his attempt to restore the Manchu dynasty. Chang and his subordinates organised and controlled the business of the railway for their own convenience and profit; they did a thriving trade in the free carriage of rice, ostensibly for the troops, but actually for sale. Chang appointed his own Traffic Manager and, though nominally a loyal

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servant of the Government at Peking, treated the railway as his own preserve. On one occasion, when he had commandeered and held in reserve twelve locomotives, to the complete dislocation of ordinary traffic, eleven of them were recovered by the lawful railway authorities in exchange for Chang's favourite wife, who had been seized and held as hostage by the revolutionaries at Nanking. Yet, if report speaks truly, Chang Hsün's swashbucklers never practised the gentle art of "squeezing" the railway with anything like the deliberate rapacity of the civil mandarins who succeeded them.

At Tsinanfu, once the advanced post of German influence in China, one finds to-day none of the lawlessness and disorder which obtained in the days of General Chang Hsün. Thanks to the firm hand and clear head of the Civil Governor, Chüeh *tajen*, the capital of Shantung affords an excellent object-lesson of the benefits of benevolent autocracy in China and of the progress to which the country might attain under good government. The results which this youthful but determined official has achieved in the administration of local and provincial affairs—complicated as they are by Japan's claims to the reversion of Germany's special rights and interests—reveal on a small scale China's urgent need of a strong man who shall put an end to the strife of predatory politicians and give peace in his time. There is nothing of the fire-eater about the Civil Governor of Shantung. Like his famous colleague, Chang Tso-lin, whose word is law throughout Manchuria, he impresses one at first sight as a scholarly person of mild and modest manners. But beneath the velvet glove there is an iron hand; his suave demeanour conceals an inflexible will, great brain-power, and a shrewd statecraft remarkable in a man of thirty-seven, comparatively inexperienced in public affairs. It is not only in progressive local administration and public works that the Civil Governor's hand has made itself felt at Tsinanfu; he has succeeded under circumstances of peculiar difficulty in maintaining

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friendly, and at the same time dignified, relations, not only with the Japanese authorities at Kiaochao, but with the faction in power at Peking and with his own Provincial Assembly. And he is one of the few high officials who have had the sense and the courage to rebuke publicly the pernicious ignorance and indiscipline of the student movement.

It was at the bleak dawn of a January morning that our train brought us to Tsinanfu, through the wintry desolation of the northern loess lands, a treeless vista of monotonous, dust-coloured country, frost-bound and dismal. It was only just daylight as we passed from the clean and well-kept railway station to the hotel—both buildings are melancholy monuments to the glory that once was Deutschdum in these parts—but already the broad macadamised roads of the Settlement were swarming with Shantung's human beasts of burden—coolies doggedly pushing single-wheeled barrows, all laden with incredible mountains of cargo. And from these barrows there arose a lamentable clamour of creaking wheels, shrill and incessant as the song of gigantic cicadas, the labour *lied* of all North China. Threading its way through this ant-like procession of untiring toilers, the Civil Governor's motor-car (it is the only one in Tsinanfu) seemed an anachronism—almost an impertinence. In the Governor's car was one of the Governor's Secretaries, Mr. Tsen Shan-wang, B.S., A.M., Ph.D., educated in America, a highly intelligent and amiable specimen of Young China, who, by sheer agility of body and mind, was apparently able to combine the duties of Secretary in Charge of Public Works and Industries at Tsinanfu with those of an expert geologist under the Ministry of Commerce and Agriculture at Peking, besides being technical adviser to one or two Chinese mining companies elsewhere. Mr. Tsen's opinions of men and affairs, characteristically American, were based on the fixed idea that noise and bustle are symptoms of a superior civilisation, that progress is a product of machinery, and

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that ballot-boxes are the only reliable signposts to Utopia. In the old rock-garden of the Civil Governor's garden, with its stone barge of state, its fan-shaped pavilion, its poet's corners and classical inscriptions, this new-school mandarin gave one the same feeling of incongruity as the linoleum on the floor of His Excellency's library or the electric lights that wink at you from venerable trees, where the city's scavenger kites have roosted for centuries.

The Governor's second private secretary, Mr. Hsü, a young graduate from Chekiang, combined a limited English vocabulary and American ideas about "progress" with an instinctive reverence for Chinese scholarship and all that it stands for. His mind was therefore in a parlous state, eternally wandering in a wilderness of strange doctrines, while drawn to its own spiritual home. Something of its tumultuous state may be gathered from the fact that his hybrid clothing ended in a bowler hat at one end and carpet slippers at the other. For that matter, all over the East to-day, the mark of the West displays itself in this sort of hideous incongruity. The Governor's reception-room was typical of a state of mind that produces neither flesh, fish, fowl, nor good red herring: an American stove, backed by Soochow curtains, leopard-skin rugs on a linoleum-covered floor, Chinese book-boxes and ancient scrolls, cheek by jowl with a cheap tapestry sofa and a bedroom dressing-table that did duty as a curio stand.

There were many other sights and sounds beside the Governor's car in the neighbourhood of the railway station significant of the impact of the West upon the East. Rickshas of fearful and wonderful construction, a local species provided with huge horns and lamps, have superseded the old cumbrous cart as the vehicle of the upper and middle classes. Most of their owners and patrons—a stout and sturdy lot of citizens—were wearing, over their silk robes, fur-collared European overcoats of the nondescript kind that now confronts one all

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*Author's Photo*]

GENERAL MA LIANG'S TROOPS AT DRILL, TSINANFU, SHANTUNG.

*B. T. Prideaux*]

ANCESTOR WORSHIP.

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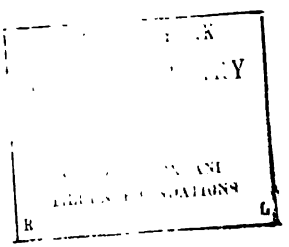

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over the East; unseemly garments which have reduced the outer man in China, Manchuria, and Japan to a common level of dull hideousness. In addition to the usual crowd of passengers, the train had brought a large batch of coolies repatriated from France; wiry fellows these, easily distinguishable from the unsophisticated native by a certain alertness in their gait and a general air of self-reliance, yet civil-spoken and displaying none of that turbulence which one had been led to expect. And everywhere in the thronged streets, amidst the goodly trees and solid buildings that remind us of Teutons departed, were the sons of Dai Nippon, civilian agents and harbingers of "peaceful penetration," more easily to be recognised here by their short stature than farther south. They held themselves discreetly, yet with dignity, as if conscious alike of their isolation and of the greatness of the Island Empire behind them. And as a reminder of that greatness, to gladden their hearts, there were brisk-stepping companies of Japanese soldiers, detachments of the troops whose vanguard duty it is to "protect" a Chinese railway on Chinese soil.

Driving to the Civil Governor's *yamên* through the native city, one realises, as in many other cities of Cathay, how wide is the gulf that lies between the exotic modernism of Young China—as displayed in the area of the Railway Settlement—and the immutable conditions imposed upon the masses of the population by their economic necessities and deep-rooted conservatism. Nowhere is this contrast more conspicuous than at Shanghæi, where, in spite of the Foreign Settlement's splendid object-lesson in efficient self-government, the native city remains practically as it was in the days of the Taiping rebellion—neglected, insanitary, unkempt; to the traveller's eye unpleasant and to his nose an offence. At Canton, Soochow, Wuchang, and other provincial capitals it is much the same. Wherever native officialdom has demonstrated its capacity to develop municipal administration on modern lines, the experiment



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always has the appearance of elaborate window-dressing, because of the medieval squalor all around and about it. Here at Tsinanfu there are many schemes for widening and metalling the narrow streets, for public lighting and sanitation, and given twenty years of an energetic Governor like Chüeh *tajen*, no doubt something might be done; but generally speaking, it will need an earthquake or a conflagration like the Fire of London to prepare the ground for effective modernisation of the great cities of China.

At dinner with the Governor at his *yamên*, after a day spent in visiting the city and inspecting the *corps d'élite* of General Ma Liang (of which more anon), there was talk of many things: of the Japanese, their flagrant trade in opium, and their claims to "special rights and interests" in Shantung; of the strife of party factions at Peking, and the need for national unity; of the student movement, and His Excellency's recent homily to its leaders; of missionaries and Bolsheviks, of Manchus and of Mings. His Excellency held strong views on the necessity of curbing the arbitrary power of the provincial Tuchuns and centralising effective government at Peking; pending that happy consummation, however, he was satisfied to maintain law and order in Shantung and to sit tight. He saw no immediate prospect of reconciliation and unity between the northern and southern factions, and deplored the ascendancy of Japanese influence at the capital, but hoped that England and the United States might intervene to relieve the situation.

The only other guests were two of His Excellency's secretaries—one my friend Mr. Hsü, the young man from Chekiang, and the other a middle-aged scholar of the orthodox school, in native dress. Mr. Hsü, while studiously deferential to his chief, took an active part in the conversation, but the literary secretary's utterances were limited to those whereby, according to polite usage in China, the thankful guest signifies his appreciation of a

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hearty meal. Only once did he interpolate a remark, and that was to express his admiration for the military genius of General Ma Liang.

The worthy General is something more than a local celebrity. His wide reputation is based on the fact that, in a crumbling world of chance and change, he has held fast in his profession to the venerable traditions of the mighty past, and, to use an expressive Americanism, has "got away with it." His ideas on the subject of military training and the art of war are those of China's ancient sages, of the scholar strategists of antiquity (very similar to those solemnly propounded by the Viceroy Chang Chih-tung at the time of the Japanese War), and he has applied them with laborious minuteness to the training of his local army of 20,000 men. What is more, he has written an elaborate treatise on the subject in seven volumes, of which he gave me a copy—a learned work, much praised by the *literati*. He is a firm believer in physical, not to say acrobatic, training, as the foundation of military efficiency. Of the prowess of the sturdy Shantung men of his command he is inordinately proud, and an exhibition of their skill forms part of every official entertainment at Tsinanfu. The performance is well worth seeing, for it includes physical drill, jiu-jitsu, wrestling matches, fencing with pikes, javelins, and staves, weight-lifting, acrobatic turns, and many other feats very deftly performed by men in the pink of condition; but of the things pertaining to modern warfare, not a sign. "If every province had an army like mine," said the General, after the concluding *tour de force* (in which a brick placed on a man's head was smashed with a sledge-hammer), "China could defy the world." Tentatively I ventured to speak of modern artillery (which, I observed, might slay even the finest athletes at twenty miles' range), of aeroplanes and poison gas. The General expressed his frank contempt for artillery. "How can they see to fire by night?" he asked. "In the dark, these fellows of mine would creep upon them and capture them

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all." As we drove back from the review to the Civil Governor's *yamên*, my host observed, "The General is a very conservative man; all the students hate him." And I wondered whether, in his heart, the Governor's sympathies were with the scholar-strategist or with the students.

On the journey from Tsinanfu by rail to Peking, *via* Tientsin, I (who had not been in these parts since 1910) could discern but little outward evidence of the stupendous changes of which one hears so much in the English and American Press. All along the railway, and especially on the line between Tientsin and Peking, it seemed to me that the allowance of railway officials, military police, and casual loafers was even more generous than in the past. The various classes of passengers were much the same. Amongst the foreigners, more Japanese, perhaps, and fewer Germans; amongst the natives of the wealthier sort, a wider distribution of the hideous hybrid garments which are the outward and visible signs of "Western learning"; but the bulk of the traffic, as of old, consisted of officials—conspicuous by their multitudinous baggage—sober, solid citizens, of the small-trader class, and crowds of coolies and peasants, in blue-grey, cotton-padded garments, close-huddling like cattle in the biting north wind. In the reserved *coupés* of the first-class corridor carriage, one perceived, as of old, the intangible, impassable barrier between East and West which no League of Nations can ever overcome; one realised, as of old, how artificial is the atmosphere of their demonstrative social relations. One felt also, with a recurrence of discomfort and distaste, the old vague sense of something furtive—a suspicion of undignified intrigues—in certain strange foregatherings of one's fellow-passengers, in whispered conferences of foreign Concessionaires and Chinese officials, and in the latter's inability or reluctance to distinguish between a *Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur* and a *Chevalier d'Industrie*.

One fellow-traveller I met on this journey of a type

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new to me, a type that has emerged from the throes of the Revolution of 1911, to wit, a Chinese Member of Parliament. He was a native of Honan, and supporter of the Anfu faction, a big, burly specimen of the gentry class, thick of neck and loud of voice, but a shrewd fellow and affable withal. Seeing that he had no seat, I invited him to share my *coupé*, which he did with alacrity. For an hour or more he talked freely of men and affairs at the capital, and from his conversation I learned many things of the art of government, as practised by Tuan Chi-jui and his friends. Of the outside world and of the meaning of representative government, he had no clearer idea than had his forefathers of the Han dynasty, and his description of the position and duties of a Member of Parliament was such as to make one sympathise with Yuan Shih-k'ai's Cromwellian method of dealing with that amorphous assembly. After a while, wearying of academic talk, he put his feet up, covered himself with a plush rug, and promptly went to sleep; and as he slept, he snored, and his snoring was even as the bull of Bashan, an incredible uproar of snorts and gasps and grunts, which speedily compelled me to leave him in undisturbed possession of the *coupé* for the rest of the journey. At the Chien Men terminus we wished each other a cordial farewell, with expressions of mutual esteem.

Say what you will, East *is* East.

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## CHAPTER XVII

### PEKING IN 1920

AT the railway terminus, where the Tientsin evening express comes to rest in the shadow of the grim old wall by the Chien Mên, and you feel your way out, as of old, by the narrow path that leads through the water-gate to the Wagons-lits Hotel, the times and tides of revolution have wrought but little visible change in the familiar scene. Indeed, one's first feeling here, as in other Chinese cities (as distinct from the Treaty Ports), is a grateful and comfortable sense of the sound and sane stability of this people and a renewed appreciation of its abiding virtue in a world of change. And this feeling grows upon you the longer you stay in Peking, in spite of all the surface indications of modernism and undercurrents of unrest. Many things have happened, it is true, in the years that have gone since last we passed out by this same water-gate. The Dragon Throne no longer "sways the wide world"; Yuan Shih-k'ai has been gathered to his fathers and a strange new flag floats over the Presidential Mansion in the Forbidden City. In the brand-new highways that lead to the modern-style Government offices, and in the Legation quarter, you will see dignitaries of State in motor-cars, wearing hideous shapeless foreign overcoats, who in bygone days used to ride in green palanquins with eight bearers. And in the evening, at a Waichiaopu dance, you may meet these same worthies, wearing dress clothes, all covered with stars and ribbons, and looking as if they had sold their birthright of Oriental dignity for a mess of alien pottage. You may even see some of their wives, in fearful and



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wonderful garments, apeing the manners and customs of the barbarian, and you may hear much windy talk of the awakening of China and the dawn of the New Era. You may hire a motor-car which will drive you, over a well-metalled road, even unto the western hills; and they will show you aeroplanes and wireless telephones, and many other stalled white elephants of recent importation, to prove that the Republic is keeping up to date and that the old business of Government contracts is as lucrative as ever. And you may see an imposing Marconi mast, rising from the grounds of the Japanese Legation (a new landmark which tells its own tale, for him that hath ears to hear), and many other signs and portents of change, political and administrative.

And yet, despite all these things, the impression which grows upon one and persists is that of the deep-rooted immutability of this wise old centre of the Chinese system. What, after all, are these straws on the shifting winds of change, compared with the abiding testimony which confronts you here on every side, in the monuments of the past and in the minds of men? Look down, over the Legation quarter, beyond the yellow roofs of the Imperial City, to the distant gates and guard-houses that mark the circumference of the city walls: except in the near foreground, where new buildings have replaced the devastations of the Boxers, all the old *feng-shui*, the haunts of countless tutelary gods, are undisturbed. And even in the Legation quarter, with all its display of defensive battlements and glacis, there are many familiar sights and sounds to recall the days of Parkes and Wade, when the glamour of mystery and the tradition of vast power still lingered about the Dragon Throne and made it something of an adventure for a white man to live in the shadow of the Forbidden City. In the spacious grounds and beautiful old buildings of the British and French Legations, in the garden of the great "I.G.," in the general features of Legation Street, aye, even in the aspect of the deserted German "Fu,"

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the passing years have left but little trace. At the British Legation the *ting-chai*, who takes your card with a broad smile of welcome, is the same man who took it, at the same door, thirty years ago. The old *kan-men-ti* at the Customs Inspectorate was guardian of this same gateway when to-day's Commissioners were students. The placid-faced old Shantung man, with his heavy bundle of silks and embroideries, is the same who sat patiently at your doorstep a generation ago. His goods, alas, are not what they used to be in pre-Boxer days, and before the silk-dyers learned the insidious uses of German anilines, but age has not withered nor custom staled this kindly soul's philosophy. As you wander through the narrower streets of the Tartar City and listen to the street vendors' clamour of bells, gongs, and cymbals, and their long-drawn melodious cries, rising, far and near, like an incense of homely lives; as you watch all sorts and conditions of humble workers doing the same thing, in the same place and the same way, that their forefathers did, you realise how meaningless, how far from the real life of this ancient people, are the things of which the politicians speak, how strong the ties that bind it to the past. You get an inkling of its quiet tenacity of purpose from the way in which it has steadily ignored the modernists' attempt to abolish the Chinese New Year festival and to adopt the Western calendar. Most of the poorer classes of Peking's inhabitants have "eaten bitterness" more than once since 1900; their houses have been plundered, and their queues cut off, in the name of new and strange gods; but neither revolutions nor Presidential Mandates can ever make them follow after these gods, or lead them to doubt the wisdom of their own ancestral ways.

Higher up the scale also, amongst the *literati* and the new-style mandarins of the Parliament, if you look beneath the transparent surface of make-believe Republicanism, you find continual evidence of the same "unbroken continuity of ancient traditions" in the

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grim struggle for place and pelf and patronage that goes on eternally about and around the seat of government. The outward and visible forms of authority are changed, but the character of the men who wield it and many of the men themselves remain the same as in the days of the great Tzŭ Hsi. *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose,* or, to put it in the words of an English philosopher, "from the upheaval of a revolution the old shibboleths emerge, with new men to utter them." The Dragon Throne has disappeared in the turmoil, even as dynasties have gone down in the past, but all the essential features of the inveterate struggle are even as the laws of the Medes and Persians. The names and war-cries of the partisans are altered, but their methods remain the same as they were in the days of the Hans and the Mings. The uncertainty and unrest which have disturbed the seats of the mighty ever since Young China grasped its chance at the time of the Manchu *débâcle,* the atmosphere of treasons, stratagems, and spoils that has since pervaded the headquarters of government at Peking and in the provinces, all these are nothing new in the history of China; they are merely symptomatic of the periodical paroxysms which occur whenever the strong hand of authority is relaxed, for lack of the right kind of ruler. To-day, because the people are as sheep without a shepherd, the struggle for supremacy between ambitious chieftains and their rival factions goes on, just as it did in the days of the Three Kingdoms; but its leaders have acquired a new sort of "world sense" and a very shrewd idea of the value of modern catchwords, which have provided new and effective war-cries for their essentially sordid strife. For the benefit of the gallery overseas, they shout lustily about Constitutions, Parliaments, and militarism. But whether the leading figures be Sun Yat-sen and Tang Shao-yi, Yuan Shih-k'ai and Liang Shih-yi, Chang Hsün and the old brigade, Tuan Chi-jui and the Anfu Club, or Chang Tso-lin and the Chihli faction, the causes and results of the strife are

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ever the same, and must remain so until, by process of exhaustion, a new ruler shall emerge strong enough and wise enough to govern the country as it needs and asks to be governed, that is to say, by a benevolent form of despotism which shall conform to the Confucian traditions, and by virtue of institutions adapted to the structural character and genius of the race. It is surely significant to note that all the "elder statesmen," whose names command a measure of respect amidst the tumult of the swashbucklers and the word-spinners, are men whose sympathies have been unmistakably identified with the maintenance of the Confucian system and the patriarchal order of government. The deep-rooted prestige of the orthodox *literati* is sufficiently indicated by Hsü Shih-chang's occupancy of the Presidential Mansion, for this venerable ex-Viceroy is not only an avowed Monarchist, but, like Yuan Shih-k'ai, he believes implicitly in the moral superiority of China's political system over that of the West. Like the great Empress-Dowager, he cannot conceive of any sound statesmanship professing to ignore the "three fundamental bonds and the five moral obligations," which are the permanent foundations of the Chinese social edifice, "as the sun and moon, for ever enlightening the world." And this same faith is held, deep down in their hearts, by those who lead their factions to fight in the name of a still-born Constitution or a lawless Parliament, by the hungry office-seekers of the capital and the satraps of the provinces. Even amongst the younger men there are signs of a reaction in favour of the classical tradition.

Another feature wherein the present-day mandarins conform to the old-established type is their individual and collective timidity in the face of any public agitation or partisan attack. Nothing has emphasised this characteristic of the ruling class more forcibly than the pitiful collapse of the Government, when the students of the capital and of Shanghai raised their clamour for the dismissal of Tsao Ju-lin and his pro-Japanese

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CAMELS RESTING, PEKING.

A CAMEL TRAIN FROM THE WESTERN HILLS, PEKING.

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colleagues in the Cabinet. The fear which overtook the *tajen* of the Ministries when the students vented their feelings by burning Tsao's house was obviously panic, due to atavistic causes that are bred in the very bones of the East, the rich man's fear for the loss of his hoarded wealth. Let there fall but a shadow of sudden tumult or alarm, and the mandarin's first instinct is to conciliate and to temporise, whilst he seeks a place of safety for his family and his portable possessions. The students' strike and demonstrations were quelled, and the turbulent youths placated, by a make-believe dismissal of the offending Ministers, with the immediate result that, all over the country, the babes and sucklings of the Mission schools were led to consider themselves as a power in the land. But before a serious crisis of political disturbance, such as General Chang Hsün's brief restoration of the Manchu dynasty in July 1917, or the Anfu Club's fight for supremacy last August, when the issues at stake are likely to lead to armed conflict and promiscuous looting, the ruling passion of the mandarin expresses itself, rapidly and by common consent, in movement of heavy-laden carts from all parts of the city to the shelter of the Legation quarter. How many times, I wonder, have Na Tung's gold bars and Hu Wei-te's curios found refuge in the sanctuary which the Boxer colleagues of these worthies did their best to destroy in 1900? At such times of tumult, the foreign Banks and the Wagons-lits Hotel became literally safety-vaults for the officials' wealth. It is a strange commentary on the chaotic condition of China under the Republic, that the very same officials who profess to share Young China's enthusiasm for the recovery of "sovereign rights" and the abolition of extra-territoriality are the first to fly for safety to the protection of the Legation guards. As a place of residence for Chinese millionaires *en retraite*, Peking, in spite of these guards and of its social and lucrative opportunities, is not as fashionable as Shanghai or Tientsin; and it is safe to say that if it were not for the sanctuary available

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in the Legation quarter, a good many of those who now labour for (or against) the State would not face the risks of official life at the capital.

As regards the political activities of the student class, I found amongst foreigners in close touch with them (notably the American Y.M.C.A.) a general tendency to regard the movement as genuinely spontaneous and proof of the increasing national consciousness and patriotism of the rising generation as a whole and of the "Western-learning" contingent in particular. One earnest Y.M.C.A. worker, with whom I witnessed and discussed the great procession of boy and girl politicians last January at Peking, to protest against the proceedings of Japan in Shantung, was of opinion that the final result of these demonstrations would be good, inasmuch as they would tend to increase the officials' and parliamentarians' sense of direct responsibility to the people. There were several thousands of youths and girls in this procession, carrying cloth bannerets, distributing handbills, and shouting their war-cries in unison to the word of command of their leaders. It was a very docile and decorous crowd, even though one of its war-cries called for the blood of Yang I-te, the Chief of Police at Tientsin; and the girls seemed to display a more lively enthusiasm than the boys. With a sincere desire to be persuaded, I could find nothing in this pathetic demonstration to differentiate it from many other manifestations of Young China's fitful fever: the undisciplined, emotional quality which is so characteristic of the Western-educated youth of the Orient has always sought and found expression in these solemn processions and long-winded protests. It was true ten years ago, and it remains true to-day, that, given the stimulus of the sense of movement *en masse*, with waving of flags and beating of drums, the moral support of foreign teachers and sympathisers, and the applause of the native Press, the Chinese student class is capable of developing a swift-spreading contagion of semi-hysterical excitement and violent activity. But

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never in all these years has any movement of this kind revealed the existence of deep-rooted political convictions or any serious purpose of constructive effort. The student agitation of last year, on the subject of the Japanese question in Shantung, merely served to frighten the mandarins at Peking, without in any way advancing China's position in regard to that question; and it failed, as usual, to denounce the official corruption, which obviously constitutes the chief obstacle to the satisfactory solution of this, or any other, national problem. It is all a shadow-play of words against a background of delusive dreams, and for the persistence of these dreams the West is chiefly responsible.

Later on, in Tientsin, a new and sordid complexion was cast upon certain of the activities of the student agitators, or at all events of the organisers of these demonstrations in the north. Documentary evidence was secured by the police which showed that the movement had been organised and financed by the political opponents of Tuan Chi-jui and the Anfu Club. The Chief of Police informed me that, according to the evidence in his possession, a sum of $200,000 had been subscribed out of the funds of the late Vice-President (Feng Kuo-chang) for the purpose of stirring up agitation against the Government, and the *North China Daily Mail* declared that even foreigners had received payment from this fund to assist in these "spontaneous" manifestations of political consciousness!

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In its main thoroughfares of trade and traffic Peking presents an appearance of animation and prosperity, combined with a very marked improvement in civic administration. Considering the general state of unrest that has prevailed since the Revolution, and all the alarms and excursions that the capital has experienced; remembering the condition of listless destitution in which its citizens lived and moved in the years following the havoc of the Boxers, one is agreeably surprised at the

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city's air of cheerful well-being, at the excellence of its roads, the smart appearance of the police, the liveliness of trade in its marts and markets, and the generally comfortable appearance of the man in the street. Indeed, in the main artery of traffic, that runs from the railway terminus at the Chien Mên to the heart of the city, it is only the broad outlines that remind one of the Peking of pre-Boxer days. The old-time scavengers are gone—the gaunt pigs, famished dogs, and human gatherers of offal that used to scour the noisome streets and garbage heaps of old; gone are the human scarecrows that used to lay the dust with the overflow of the sewers; and gone, or almost gone, the sorrowful army of maimed and leprous beggars that cried for alms in the gates of the city and on the outskirts of the temples. The old, springless cart, with its powerful Szechuan mule and the high, narrow wheels that cut the roads to ribbons, is vanishing fast, ousted by the automobiles of the great and by jinrickshas of innumerable types. I do not mean to suggest that, in the matter of smells and squalor, Peking is not still a very medieval spot, but there have been some very energetic new brooms at work in the past ten years, and some very effective spring-cleaning has been done. The improvements that have been made in the matter of roads alone prove that, given sufficient incentive and money, the Chinese are quite capable of collective effort and successful organisation in the public service. At Tsinanfu and Tainanfu you may see the same lesson writ large across two very ancient cities; in these matters, China's trouble lies not in discovering new sources of useful energy, but only in maintaining their output. Thus, for example, the Peking police have been well disciplined and kept up to the mark, by common consent of a very nervous bureaucracy, ever since Yuan Shih-k'ai's troops looted the houses of the parliamentary delegates in February 1912, and the machinery for checking crimes against property is at present a great deal swifter and more drastic than in the old days of the Board of Punish-

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ments. The police have a Chief whose methods for discouraging lawlessness and looting are quiet but very effective. On the 29th of January, 1920, for instance, it came to my knowledge accidentally that eleven men had been shot that morning, without other formality than orders from headquarters, having been taken red-handed in some bandit or burglary business.

But good roads and a "loyal" police force mean public funds, and prosperous shopkeepers mean buyers with money in their purses, and one wonders at first sight from whence has come all this money to the capital, in these days of truculent provincial Tuchuns, who decline to render unto Cæsar that which used to be his. But the explanation is simple enough. The money which has given to Peking this unexpected air of well-being and vivacity has been raised chiefly by politicians for politicians, and much of it is lavishly spent by the parliamentary supporters of the faction which happens to be in control of the Boards of Revenue and Communication—the two milch cows of national finance. The five years of the Great War were very fat years for China, years in which the value of her silver currency was trebled and her indemnity payments remitted, whilst the balance of profitable trade brought a vast amount of money into the country. The Government's immediate liabilities were greatly reduced and its revenues increased. These were years, in fact, when, had there been anything of genuine patriotism or statesmanship in Cabinet or Parliament, China might well have put her financial house in order. But not all the treasures of Golconda could have satisfied the rapacity of the military freebooters and carpet-bag politicians who gathered in their thousands to batten on the public purse. The Customs and salt surpluses, railway revenues and other sources of normal income were merely appetisers to this hungry horde. From Japan, in return for promissory notes and concessions (that are likely to cost the nation dear) came a steady stream of loans and subsidies which went, for the

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most part, to fatten the henchmen of the Anfu Club, who formed the majority of Parliament, and all the locust swarm of the fast-swelling bureaucracy. These were days of easy money, when, amidst the clash of factions, the price of a vote in the House of Representatives soared from the hundreds to the thousands (as when Tsao Kun was an aspirant for the Vice-Presidency), and, if report speaks truly, a great deal of this money has been spent in the fashionable shops and tea-houses of the Chien Mên quarter, to the enriching of thrifty citizens. Even so the whirligig of Time brings in his revenges, and the locusts give back the years that the locust has eaten.

In these days, when Young China and many of its well-meaning friends talk volubly of "sovereign rights," it is worth remembering that very few cities in the land have escaped outbreaks of lawlessness and looting since the Revolution, except those in which the foreigner and his vested interests are protected by the display of force. Had it not been for the presence of the Legations and the forces at their command, Peking would hardly have escaped rough treatment at the hands of the rabble armies of the contending factions in one or other of the several crises that have occurred since 1912. And even with the protection which the city derives from the prestige and potential power of the Legations, the presence of these hordes of undisciplined troops, whose pay is always in arrears, is a constant cause of unrest, which readily takes the form of sudden panics. When rumours and alarm signals are flying, the thought of these unruly masses of marauders, loosely held in leash, is ever in the minds of peace-loving householders, and at the first whisper of armies on the move, the trains for Tientsin are filled with crowds of timid citizens and there is much burying of treasure by night. The amount of gold and silver and valuables which lies "cached" around and about Peking to-day is said by the Chinese themselves to be much larger than the secret hoards of pre-Boxer days.

Discussing this matter of hoarding, a banker of wide

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experience informed me that the marked growth of this tendency is directly traceable to the slim financial methods of the bureaucracy, and particularly to the banking operations of the Chiaotung clique. The old-fashioned trustworthy native banks in private hands have been almost completely frozen out by the new-style Government Banks, of whose methods it need only be said that most of their notes are quoted at heavy discounts (50 per cent. and over), and that the average prudent citizen is not disposed to entrust his *sycee* to their safe keeping. Therefore the hoarding habit has steadily grown, and a vast quantity of silver has thus been withdrawn from circulation. During the War, this helped to send up the market price of silver (in January 1920 the Tientsin *tael* touched ten shillings), and this, in turn, seriously handicapped China's export trade.

As illustrating the condition of affairs in the Tuchuns' armies, and how the fear of them is carried and spread by swift-footed rumour, a certain visit paid to Peking by the Tuchun of Jehol in January was instructive. A fine specimen of the old-style Chinese military commander is Tuchun Chiang, of the northern marches, a veteran standing six feet in his socks, who fought with Gordon against the Taipings, and a genial warrior withal. He attended a reception at the British Legation, and brought with him not only the flavour of picturesque old days and ways, which is becoming sadly rare under the Republic, but also a suggestion of something premonitory, a whispering wind of warning. His troops, he declared, had had no pay for seven months, and he had come to Peking to get money for them from the Ministry of War, or know the reason why. If it were not forthcoming, there was "big trouble" ahead. When I spoke of this distinguished visitor to a Chinese merchant who prides himself on knowing a good deal about wheels within wheels in the north, he smiled and said it was quite true that the Jehol troops had not been paid for a long time, and were becoming mutinous, but common report had it that for months



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past the Tuchun had been burying a large amount of *sycee*. It is probably safe to say that the twenty-two Tuchuns between them have squeezed enough in the last five years to balance the national budget for the next ten, and that, among all these self-determined satraps, only one or two (notably the Tuchun of Shansi) have shown themselves just and patriotic rulers of the "stupid people."

Another manifestation of the lawless activities of the "licentious soldiery" is their barefaced trade in contraband opium, conducted under the protection of their chiefs. There are many curious features about the opium traffic in China to-day, from Canton to Kirin, but none more curious than the brisk business in the drug openly conducted at the capital, not by the opium-shops (for these were suppressed long ago to the sound of moral drums and virtuous trumpets), but by officials, civil and military. As I ventured to predict in 1912, to the great scandal of all true believers, the "opium-abolition" movement has put an end to the *bona fide* importation of the Indian drug and checked the transit trade in all its former channels, merely to divert it into new ways, more directly profitable to the mandarin. In January of last year you could buy as much native opium as you wished in Peking for $7 an ounce, and Indian opium at $12, and it was commonly reported in the city that the bulk of the supply came from Moukden, brought in by the soldier emissaries of the great Tuchun, Chang Tso-lin, and regularly controlled from his agents' offices.

Calling one day at a curio-shop in the Soochow *hutung* to ask after the proprietor, an old friend of former days, I learned that he had died the year before, and from his eldest son I gathered that excessive opium-smoking, after seven years of abstinence, was chiefly responsible for his death. I also learned that the anti-opium movement had become to all intents and purposes a dead letter. When I inquired how the father had been able to procure the drug, his son replied that any one who had the money could purchase it from the officials at any time. It came from

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*B. T. Prideaux*]

MILLET (KAO LIANG) IN OCTOBER.

ON THE FROZEN PEIHO, TIENTSIN—OLD-STYLE LOCOMOTION AND NEW.

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the north (*k'ou wai*), he said, brought over the border by Russians and Japanese, most of the drug being grown in Manchuria and Kansuh. Later on, at Moukden, I saw something of the machinery of this traffic in working—a dozen evil-looking Russian women of the Polish-Jew type, breakfasting at the Yamato Hotel, on their way through from Harbin to Dalny, opium and morphia smugglers all. And Japan's "self-determined" parcel post is another important factor in the situation.

Ignoring the fact that opium is grown in many parts of the country with the obvious connivance of officials, and that the trade is conducted at many centres under official auspices, a section of Young China's mandarins has recently drawn the usual red herring across the opium trail and endeavoured to make the corrupt traffic serve the purposes of its campaign for the abolition of extra-territoriality. In former days, when its first object was to get rid of the competition of the Indian opium trade, Young China and the foreign Anti-Opium Societies used to declare that China could and would abolish opium completely, when once the Indian importation had been stopped. Thanks chiefly to the fervent propaganda of the sentimentalists and "uplifters" in England and America, the Indian trade was abolished, and forthwith opium-growing and smuggling became one of the mandarins' most lucrative sources of income. The fact is notorious and undeniable; at missionary meetings to-day it is either passed over in sad silence or treated as a lamentable case of backsliding. But the section of Young China to which I refer sees nothing lamentable in the situation. On the contrary, it is now urging the sentimentalists and the uplifters to believe and to preach that the opium traffic will be finally abolished if once the foreigners' rights of extra-territoriality are given up; and already there are indications of a widespread propaganda developing along these lines. At a banquet following the meeting of the Anti-Narcotic Society in Tientsin in January of last year, Mr. Huang (educated in America),

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Director of the Bureau of Foreign Affairs, made a typical speech, in which he declared that China could not be expected to deal properly with the opium and morphia trades until she had recovered her political autonomy. Thanks to the loose thinking, bred of facile catchwords which prevails in England and America, the "sovereign rights recovery" movement is now making considerable progress, for the reason that it is not in the nature of the earnest idealist to allow the melancholy experience of yesterday to check his enthusiasm for the Utopia of to-morrow. To any one who knows anything about China, the idea of putting an end to opium by abolishing the foreigners' extra-territorial rights is grimly humorous, but, unfortunately, many of the good people who share Mr. President Wilson's illusions about the world of men have no knowledge of the East and but little sense of humour. And Mr. Huang, despite his dress-clothes, has both.

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There were many new features of interest in the picturesque pageant of life at Peking as I saw it last year, many lights and shadows suggestive of coming events, but few more significant, as straws on the wind, than the pillar-boxes of the Imperial (and quite independent) Japanese Post, dotted about all over the capital. Japan's "conquest by post" throughout all the regions of the North is a very real and a very insidious business, more seriously injurious to China's revenues and sovereign rights than, shall we say, her hold on Kiaochao: yet the Chinese authorities and Press patriots seem to see nothing particularly derogatory to their dignity in a proceeding which asserts "concession" privileges at the very heart of government. When I spoke on the subject to Mr. Liang Shih-yi, the great wirepuller in chief, he said that the Government had protested against these sign-posts of the Rising Sun's ascendancy, but the Japanese Minister had paid no attention, and what more could they do? The boycott was evidently foredoomed to failure.

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At the Wagons-lits Hotel, such signs of change as one observes are suggestive of Europe in the melting-pot rather than of China in transition. At the Saturday-night dances, where diplomacy unbends, one sees a sprinkling of Chinese, and now and then some spirit, bolder than the rest, will defy his ancestral gods by "posturing with a female to the sound of horns"; but the crowd of jazzers (far more numerous than in pre-war days) seems to be chiefly composed of Americans, most of them good, healthy-looking youngsters of the clean-run breed that one finds now in many an outpost of the Standard Oil, the British-American Tobacco Co., and the Y.M.C.A. It was, of course, to be expected that American interests in China would rapidly expand during the first four years of the war, and before the States came into the struggle; nevertheless, some of the manifestations of this expansion are surprising, and one does not get used to them very readily, because all one's memories of Peking are somehow opposed to the idea that haste and hustle can ever be possible within these old grey walls. In the same way one cannot get quite accustomed to the silent places that used to be humming hives of German activity in these parts; there is something almost ominous in the solitudes that were the Legation and the Deutsch-Asiatische Bank.

The stretch of the city wall which lies between the Chien Mên and the Hata Gate, ever memorable for the Legations' grim struggle with the Boxers, remains, as of old, the spot where the foreigner takes his constitutional in dignified seclusion, no Chinese being allowed to intrude thereon. Here, of an afternoon, you may see the pillars of many States discussing the destinies of nations and the latest gossip of the diplomatic world. Beneath, the distant aspect of the city, with its wide expanse of low buildings screened by trees, where the yellow roofs of the Palace and the great towers of the main gates glisten and glow in the setting sun, is much the same scene as the European gazed upon when first the armies of the Western

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barbarian camped yonder on the Anting plain. Close under the wall, to the southward, the canal runs, as of yore, still flanked by garbage heaps, stinking to heaven; beyond the railway line you may catch a glimpse of camel-trains, slowly wending their wonted way towards the western hills. From the marts and markets of the Chien Mên quarter rises the vague murmur of innumerable buyers and sellers, and in the distance, to the north-west, a little yellow cloud tells of the coming of a sand-laden wind. Everything in the distance is unchanged; it is only here, beside us on the wall, that one is reminded of time and the hour, and of all the things that have happened to China since first we trod these ancient weather-beaten bricks. Here you see a group of Italian airmen, beautiful creatures all covered with medals, pleasantly engaged for some weeks past in killing time (not to speak of ladies) while they wait for the much-advertised coming of d'Annunzio. And here are two interesting specimens of the youngest of Young China, recently returned from an American University with nice young American wives. There is nothing particularly new or strange in this particular manifestation of the results of Western learning, and the pathos of it is an old story:

Alas, regardless of their doom, the little victims play!

To-day, arm in arm, they walk upon the wall, with eyes that see not, strangers to both the worlds in which they move, but dimly feeling already their inevitable destiny of tragic isolation. Ten years hence, no doubt, she will be back in God's Own Country, with a working knowledge of the East, and he will be the centre of an Oriental *ménage* on the patriarchal system. For East is East and West is West, and if, in the false dawn, they seem to meet, before the sun sets each must go his destined way. For such is the law, pre-ordained.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### AN EMPEROR IN WAITING

To the north of the Tartar City in Peking, not far from the old Drum Tower, there lies a little *quartier* of quiet streets where, despite all the alarms and upheavals of the past twenty years, Time seems to have stood still. The placid stream of life that flows through this secluded backwater reminds one very vividly of the Peking of bygone days, the city of dreadful dust and splendid dreams, whose mysterious charm lingers with such imperishable fragrance in the treasure-house of memory. A few children flying kites or playing in the shade of ancient trees, a few timid-faced women bargaining with the vegetable-sellers at their doors; little groups of gatemen and servants gathered about the entrance of a *tajen's* residence; and here and there an old-fashioned springless mule cart, with its driver slumbering contentedly on the shaft. Strangely quiet, these old streets; there are no shops to break the grey line of high, windowless walls, that enclose invisible courtyards and gardens, and the deep-eaved, sloping roofs of houses, all built to one design. Only from time to time the long-drawn cry of some hawker on his rounds, the tinkling cymbals of the beancurd seller, or the reedy flute of an itinerant chiropodist, breaks on the unfrequented silence, and lures the children from their noiseless games. Time was, when these streets were the abode of wealth and fashion, when many of the men who own these houses were snug and prosperous dignitaries, battening on the bounty that flowed from the Dragon Throne, for this was, and still is, essentially a Manchu quarter, as you may know by the curious head-



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gear of the women at their doors. But to-day the glory of the Great Inheritance has faded, and with it, in many cases, has gone the livelihood of men who, bred to a birthright of sheltered ease, are quite incapable of earning one.

Faded, but not utterly departed, the glory that once was the Manchu dynasty. For, as all the world knows, the "Lord of Ten Thousand Years," though shorn of much pomp of majesty and power, still sits upon the Dragon Throne; and, as all the world knows also, only the hour and the Man are needed to restore to the allegiance of the Son of Heaven most of the men who now prudently profess and call themselves Republicans. They know, the dwellers in these quiet streets, that in every house throughout the city, a Dragon flag lies folded away—were they not all unfolded to the breeze, for one brief week, only three years ago? They know that the President of the Republic was a Grand Secretary by the grace of Her Majesty the "Old Buddha," and that, since her passing, he has ever been a very faithful Guardian of the Heir-Apparent; they know that every high official in Peking, having been a party to the restoration scheme of 1917, may be so again at any moment. Is it not freely rumoured that the Son of Heaven is to be married to President Hsü's daughter, the Imperial Clan consenting, and that, by this "harmonious fusion," the way will be prepared for the re-establishment of the Throne, as a limited, constitutional, and truly national Monarchy?

To the European mind, such a solution of China's political problems may seem fantastic; nevertheless, seriously considered, it is no more fantastic than the fact that the Emperor still remains part of the recognised order of things, in the vicinity of, and in close touch with, the Presidential Mansion; and that, within the narrow limits of the Forbidden City, the daily life of his court, with all its wonted privileges, dignities, and ceremonies, pursues the even tenor of immemorial usage. A Republic, with an Emperor held in reserve as part of the established order of things, and treated with all due

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deference by the powers that be, may strike the European as an impossible arrangement; yet it is eminently characteristic of that instinct of the Chinese race-mind which is always opposed to finality, either in politics or business. It is a fundamental principle in Chinese statecraft (which Young China obeys just as implicitly as its forefathers) never to burn its boats, to leave loopholes for compromise and adjustment, and to allow for the contingencies of inevitable reaction.

It is to be remembered that the Manchu Dynasty has never definitely abdicated [1] and that the Imperial Decree establishing the Republic was the work of two famous Chinese officials, both of whom were convinced that the institution of a Republic in China could only mean "the instability of a rampant democracy, of dissension and partition." The subsequent maintenance of the Emperor as the acknowledged head of the subsidised Imperial Clan is therefore not only explicable, but thoroughly consistent with every principle of mandarin statecraft. Consistent also with the workings of the race-mind, which clings instinctively to the unbroken continuity of ancient traditions, have been the arrangements made by the "Republican" authorities for the dignity and comfort of the Manchu Emperor and his Court, and the respectful attitude maintained towards His Majesty by all concerned, from the President downwards. In the seclusion of his Palace, surrounded by his Manchu and Chinese tutors, his Ministers and Chamberlains, His Majesty maintains all the time-honoured ceremonial of the Imperial Court, enjoying "due courtesy, not fealty and obedience" (as a Presidential Mandate puts it), from his former subjects.

This "due courtesy" and the attitude of metropolitan officialdom towards the Throne, were very significantly displayed after General Chang Hsün's serio-comic attempt to restore the Throne, for his own ends, by a *coup d'état* in July 1917. Those who follow events in China will remember that, without warning, and certainly without

[1] Vide *Recent Events and Present Policies in China*, pp. 170, 178.

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connivance on his part, the Emperor was compelled by Chang Hsün to resume the Throne, that for a week Edicts were issued in his name and the Dragon Flag waved once more over the Forbidden City. But when the little plot had come to its inglorious end, and Chang Hsün's forces had been sent home (with full pay and the honours of war), no word was heard against the Emperor, either at Peking or in the provinces. On the contrary, the Government of the Republic went out of its way to express its respectful regrets to His Majesty that his seclusion should have been invaded and his peace disturbed, by the reprehensible proceedings of an ambitious schemer. No monarch could ask for a more deferential expression of sympathy from his loyal subjects, and His Majesty's reply was couched in terms equally appropriate to the delicate situation. Delicate it certainly was, for all North China was aware that nearly every high official in Peking was a party to the scheme for the restoration of the Throne, and that the miscarriage of General Chang's plot was not due to any difference of opinion on this point, but only to his unwillingness to agree to a fair division of the spoils of office.

When, by Decree of the Throne, the Chinese Republic was first proclaimed, the boy-Emperor was six years of age. To-day he is in his sixteenth year, and the question of his future is therefore becoming a matter of increasing concern, not only to his family, but to the venerable guardians of the Heir-Apparent, of whom Hsü Shih-Chang, President of the Republic, is one. Especially interesting and important is the problem of his marriage, which, if Imperial traditions be observed, must be decided before long. As already stated, the opinion is strongly held, and freely expressed in high official circles at Peking, that the best solution of China's political difficulties would be for the Imperial Clan to consent to His Majesty's marriage with the daughter of President Hsü. The underlying idea is, that if this were done, and the exclusive Houselaws of the Manchu dynasty thus abrogated by the

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marriage of the Emperor to a Chinese lady, the anti-dynastic movement in the South must lose such moral force as it now claims and the way be prepared for the re-establishment of the Monarchy Constitutional, limited, and shorn of all the exclusive Manchu privileges.

The reader will observe that I am speaking now of the opinion which prevails amongst the educated class of Chinese, and especially the *literati* of the old régime, in North China. So far as my observation goes, the "Western-learning" section of Young China which holds official positions at Peking, displays no violent opposition to this way of thinking. In the South, and especially amongst the vociferous section of students and journalists, which lives by and for political agitation in the shelter of the Treaty Ports, they will tell you that the restoration of the Throne is impossible, and that the Republic represents a genuine expression of the people's fixed will. Times being as they are, theirs are the opinions which reach and impress England and America; nevertheless, I have no hesitation in saying that they are wrong, and that the movement for the restoration of the Throne will eventually have the hearty approval of the vast majority of the people. They will welcome it, not only because the Dragon Throne has been for ages an essential part of the Confucian system, inseparable from the ideas of an agricultural race born and bred on patriarchal Theism, but also because of the callous corruption and disorder with which the present administration has become identified all over the country. And this approval will be strengthened as public opinion gradually comes to learn that the young Emperor is not only gifted with a very high order of intelligence, but that his education has been such as to lead him to break completely with the prejudices and delusions of the past. Those who know him best speak enthusiastically of his abilities, of his lofty conception of duty, and of his desire to play a man's part in life. Like the late unfortunate Emperor Kuang Hsü, it is his earnest wish to be active in the work of constitu-

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tional reform and to identify himself with the true welfare and progress of the Chinese people. It is also his keen ambition to be allowed to complete his education by travel in Europe and America, and to be released from the fettering traditions of the past which confine him in the Forbidden City.

During my recent visit to Peking, I was fortunate in making the acquaintance of Mr. R. F. Johnston, English tutor to His Majesty, and of learning from him much about the young Emperor's education and of life at the Imperial Court. Mr. Johnston is a distinguished scholar, an eminent authority on Buddhism and Chinese poetry, the author of *From Peking to Mandalay*, *Buddhist China*, and other well-known works. To visit him in his Chinese house, in that quiet little street near the Drum Tower which I have described, to hear him talk of his daily work and that of the Emperor's three other tutors, to get an intimate and vivid picture of present-day conditions in the Forbidden City—this was an experience well worth a long journey. There are people who declare that the romance of the East is dead and its glamour a delusion, that its high places have been invaded and desecrated by modern materialism; but the tale which Mr. Johnston told me, in the peaceful seclusion of an inner courtyard, amidst the miniature shrines and grottos of a little rock garden in the classical style, was, to my mind, as romantic in its way as anything in Marco Polo's adventures or the memoirs of the Jesuit Fathers at the Court of Kanghsi. Indeed, there is something which appeals most powerfully to the imagination, in the presence of this English tutor in the Forbidden City, planting seeds of modern worldly wisdom in the mind of the Son of Heaven, whilst all about him the ancient ceremonial of the Court continues, mindful only of the venerated past.

The reader may well wonder how and why Mr. Johnston ever came to become an Imperial Tutor in Peking, seeing that by profession he is a District Officer and Magistrate of the British "Leased Territory" of Weihaiwei. The

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THE NORTHERN RAILWAY APPROACH TO PEKING.

UNDER THE WALLS OF PEKING.

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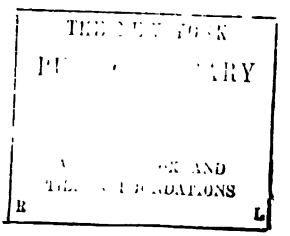


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story is interesting, because it aptly illustrates the curiously intimate relations which exist between the mandarins who govern China (even when they agree to manifest irreconcilable differences in public) and that "bias of class" which is stronger than any of their political opinions. At the time of the anti-dynastic movement (which became republican by accident), in 1911, a number of officials who had acquired wealth under the old régime, and who had no love for the Cantonese clique, sought security for themselves and their portable property in one or other of the Foreign Settlements. Several of those who belonged to the powerful Anhui faction, and had held high office under the Manchus, found a safe refuge, near to the capital, in Tientsin; others established themselves in the German colony at Kiaochao or on British territory at Weihaiwei. Amongst the latter was Li Ching-mai, a younger son of the Viceroy Li Hung-chang, who resembles his famous father in combining progressive ideas with staunch adherence to the Imperialism of the orthodox *literati*; as Minister to Austria, and in other diplomatic missions under the monarchy, he had acquired a reputation for perspicacity and knowledge of foreign affairs. At Weihaiwei he made Mr. Johnston's acquaintance, and it was at his suggestion, evidently made with a shrewd eye for the probable course of events at Peking hereafter, that the present President of the Republic approved of the engagement of Mr. Johnston's services as tutor to His Majesty Hsüan Tung. The arrangement was sanctioned in due course by Sir John Jordan, on behalf of the British Government; and Mr. Johnston, detached from duty at Weihaiwei, took up his duties at the Palace in 1918.

The education of the young Emperor conforms strictly to the principles and precedents of the Confucian ethics and immemorial usage, every hour of his day being filled with its prescribed study, exercise, or recreation. Besides his English teacher, three other tutors are in regular attendance on His Majesty. His first lesson begins at

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6 a.m., when he studies the Chinese classics under the direction of Chen Pao-chen, a distinguished scholar and poet, who was an ardent supporter of the Emperor Kuang Hsü's programme of constitutional reform in 1898. The Emperor takes more kindly to his Chinese lessons than to those of his Manchu tutor, the inclination of his mind and sympathies being essentially Chinese, and at the same time progressive. It is the duty of the old Manchu Shih Hsü, as guardian of the Heir-Apparent, to instruct His Majesty in the language and literature of his forefathers. Shih Hsü achieved distinction in 1900 as a fanatical leader of the Boxer movement and a stiff-necked conservative. Since then his spirit has been chastened by the crowding misfortunes of the Imperial Clan; in his old age he lives and moves, unconvinced but unprotesting, a picturesque and pathetic survival, in the diminished shadow of the Dragon Throne, doing his best to maintain its ceremonies and dignities. His feelings concerning the young Emperor amidst the wrack of the Republic are displayed by an attitude wherein courtesy struggles hard with conservatism, and wins a cheerless victory. He was strongly opposed to the idea of His Majesty learning English and to the intrusion of a barbarian into the sacred precincts; but the fact being accomplished, he has accepted it with courteous resignation, as one more buffet of outrageous fortune. Towards his fellow-tutors—even towards the foreigner—he displays the dignified courtesy which good manners demand; for the rest, there are enough derelicts of the old Imperial Clan in and about the Palace to provide him with the consolations of congenial society.

The third Imperial tutor is Chu I-fan, far-famed amongst the *literati* as a master of the science and art of caligraphy; from him the Emperor has acquired, with infinite diligence, a style of penmanship which scholar experts sincerely praise for its distinction and classic elegance. Following the time-honoured custom of his ancestors, His Majesty takes pleasure in making ceremonial scrolls of characters penned and sealed with his own

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hand, which he bestows as birthday or New Year gifts upon his tutors and guardians and other meritorious persons. Amongst the treasures of Mr. Johnston's library are several of these marks of Imperial favour, together with a jade Ju-Yi (Chinese sceptre or baton) of exquisite workmanship.

Towards all his tutors the young Emperor observes the respectful demeanour prescribed by the Confucian code—standing up whenever they enter or leave his presence, and addressing them with punctilious deference. On their birthdays, and at certain festivals, he sends congratulatory gifts to their homes, with all the ceremony prescribed by Imperial etiquette on such occasions. The arrival of a gift of melons from the Lord of Ten Thousand Years ("Wan Sui-Yeh," as the citizens of Peking still call him) creates a commotion, and much talk of bygone days, in the quiet neighbourhood of Mr. Johnston's house. At the four seasonal festivals, each tutor receives a substantial present in money, a custom which dates back to very ancient times.

All the Imperial tutors have the right (also prescribed by ancient usage) to ride in palanquins through the Imperial precincts, which, for the sake of "face" preservation, they do. Mr. Johnston is the healthy kind of man who would far rather walk than be carried by human beasts of burden in a sedan-chair, but he subordinates his personal inclinations in this matter to the necessity for conforming to Oriental ideas of the dignity of an Imperial Tutor and the importance of maintaining that dignity intact in the eyes of the eunuchs and myrmidons of the Palace. The Emperor himself, after his lessons, returns to his private apartments in a yellow chair, borne by twenty attendants.

Mr. Johnston gives the Emperor his lessons in the same apartment of the Chien Ching Kung (Palace of Heavenly Purity) where the ill-fated Kuang Hsü first learned and discussed the principles of constitutional government with the Cantonese scholar and iconoclast, Kong Yu-wei,

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and where he plotted with that visionary reformer to overthrow the power of the Empress-Dowager. A place of many memories and many vicissitudes is this stately Chien Ching Kung, where the grandson of Jung Lu, in company with Prince Tsai Tao's eleven-year-old son, now listens respectfully to a foreigner expounding the elements of Western learning. It was in this Palace, curiously decorated with a profusion of foreign clocks, that, for the first time, the old Buddha penitent received the Diplomatic Body after her return to Peking in 1901. If her august shade should be permitted to revisit the glimpses of the moon, to frequent the scenes which witnessed so many triumphs of her crowded life, to what depths of despond must that proud spirit be brought by the present humiliation of her Imperial House!

Mr. Johnston describes the young Emperor as a lad of unusual intelligence and pleasant disposition, keenly interested in his studies and particularly in geography and foreign politics. He followed the negotiations of the Versailles Conference from day to day with critical attention, studying the course of events as described in the Chinese Press, by the aid of the best maps procurable, and asking questions which showed a remarkable grasp of the general situation. On one occasion, for example, he complained to Mr. Johnston that the boundaries of Luxembourg were not clearly shown on his map of Europe. His reading and talks with his English tutor have filled him with a keen desire to travel abroad, to see with his own eyes the wide world and all its wonders; and the idea is being seriously and favourably discussed by those whose business it is to determine what things are lawful and expedient for His Majesty. The President of the Republic, Hsü Shih-chang (who, as guardian of the Heir-Apparent and a Monarchist by conviction, maintains cordial and intimate relations with His youthful Majesty), favours the proposal that he should proceed before long on a tour of Europe and America, *incognito*, and escorted by Mr. Johnston, Li Ching-Mai, and a small

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suite of personal attendants. This, and the question of the Emperor's marriage, are subjects of continual and serious discussion in the Palace. According to all dynastic precedents, the time is close at hand when his betrothal must be decided, so that if his wish to travel is to be fulfilled it cannot be much longer delayed. It is said that Prince Tsai Tao and other leaders of the Imperial Clan support the idea of the "harmonious fusion" marriage, and that it even meets with the resigned approval of the four old ladies of Kuang Hsü's Court and the aged Consort of Tung Chih, who, from their privacy "behind the screen," still play at Palace politics. If China were truly mistress in her own house, if the men who profess to guide the destinies of the Republic were not actually in bondage to their Japanese paymasters, it might, I think, be taken for granted that the young Emperor would before long be betrothed to the President's daughter, and that before his marriage he would be permitted to complete his education by travel abroad. But as matters stand, the nominal rulers of China can no more decide such matters for themselves than could Yuan Shih-k'ai when he was virtually Dictator. The ultimate destiny of His Majesty Hsüan Tung depends neither on the old gentlemen of the Presidential Mansion, nor on the old ladies of the Imperial Household, but on winged words spoken in the Secret Council Chamber of the Elder Statesmen of Japan.

Meanwhile, maintained by the four-million-dollar allowance granted to the Imperial family by the makers of the Republic in 1912, the daily life of the Court within the narrow limits of the Forbidden City pursues the even tenor of its ancient ways. No longer may the Emperor leave the inner precincts to make stately progress through the Imperial and Chinese enclosures of the capital, and perform the solemn sacrifices of the summer and winter solstices at the Temple of Heaven. No longer may he invoke, on behalf of his people, the favour of the Divine



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Husbandman at the Temple of Agriculture, or receive the homage-bearing envoys of tributary tribes. But within the precincts of the Forbidden City the elaborate ceremonial of his Court, with all its ordinances, ritual, and high-sounding titles, continues as of old. All about him, splendidly steadfast and unchanged, are the temples and palaces of his forefathers, monuments to the departed glories of Kang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung. All about him also are the Iron-capped Princes and the hereditary chieftains of the Eight Banners, picturesque but parasite survivals of a once warlike race. A considerable portion of the Republic's money-grant goes to the maintenance in listless idleness of three or four thousand of these Manchu pensioners, living either in the Tartar City or in the neighbourhood of the Imperial tombs. Last, but not least, the Chinese eunuchs of the old régime still infest the Palace to the number of a thousand or more, by all accounts worthy successors of the "rats and foxes" whose evil influence contributed so largely to the demoralisation of Hsüan Tung's ancestors after the reign of Chia Ch'ing.

The young Emperor's disposition and physique are healthy and normal, but even without the assistance of scheming Dowagers or treacherous Regents, danger must lurk in wait for him, danger of demoralisation and effeminacy, so long as these sleek rogues remain to practise their intrigues and insidious arts from the gatekeeper's lodge even unto the King's bedchamber. Mr. Johnston, indeed, regards the continued presence of these eunuchs in the Palace as the greatest of all the dangers to which the young Emperor is exposed, and the history of the dynasty fully justifies this opinion. For, as all these crafty creatures know that their opportunities of acquiring wealth and power depend upon the demoralisation and weakness of their sovereign, they will lay their snares for him, even as their predecessors laid them for Hsien Feng and Tung Chih.

On the occasion of Mr. Johnston's first appearance at

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PEKING: A LLAMA RITUAL.

IN THE MANCHU QUARTER, PEKING.

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the Palace, the eunuchs, on the plea of "*lao kuei-chü*," or time-honoured custom, politely but firmly requested that he should pay his footing, to the tune of $150. But Mr. Johnston was equally firm in his determination to prove that the new Imperial Tutor represented new ideas, and that the gentle art of "squeezing" had no place in his curriculum. Knowing too much of Oriental ways to make them "lose face" and generate wrath-matter by a blunt refusal, he temporised and promised to bring the money on the following day. He brought it accordingly, but with it he tendered them for signature a receipt in duplicate, one copy for the President of the Republic and one for the British Minister. Chagrined by this departure from all classical precedent, the eunuchs withdrew their request; but before they departed the new tutor gave them in forcible vernacular a stern lecture on the evil of their ways.

His Majesty Hsüan Tung is fond of exercise, but the restricted area of the Palace enclosure affords but little opportunity for gratifying his healthy inclinations. He rides occasionally, although there is but little joy in this form of exercise, as prescribed for him by the rigid conservatism of the Court; for an attendant leads his pony at a sedate pace round and round a stone-paved court-yard. Mr. Johnston hopes that His Majesty's guardians and advisers may be persuaded before long to allow him to take up his residence at the Summer Palace, where he would be less exposed to the demoralising influence of the eunuchs, and where he might learn to play tennis and get regular rowing exercise on the lake. The boy-Emperor himself longs for the freedom of wider space with all the eagerness of youth, gazing wistfully through the bars of his gilded cage upon the wide world, of which he has heard so much and seen nothing.

He takes a boy's keen interest in all the mechanical inventions of the West, and shows serious application in endeavouring to learn their principles and uses. When, in December, President Hsü Shih-chang asked Mr.

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Johnston to suggest suitable presents for him to send with his congratulations on the Emperor's birthday in February, Mr. Johnston asked his pupil for a list of the things that he would like to have. The first thing on His Majesty's list was a Corona typewriter, the use of which he proposed to learn. The Son of Heaven, tapping dutiful messages on a typewriter to the Dowager Consort of Tung Chih, is a picture calculated to disturb one's sense of the fitness of things, like the motor-cars which hoot and hustle through the once-sacred enclosure of the Tung Hua Men. But the East of the "Arabian Nights" is gone for ever and the note of a Corona in the Forbidden City is but one of many whisperings of the winds of change. May the gods send them fortunate for His Majesty Hsüan Tung!

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## CHAPTER XIX

### THREE PALACES [1]

REVISITING the East after an absence of years, it seems to me as if all its splendid past and all its present discontents were recorded and symbolised in the Imperial Palaces of Peking, Seoul, and Tokyo. Of one race are they, these three, but each is beautiful with a distinctive beauty of its own. Stately and splendid, with the dignity of great simple things, each tells its own tale, that he who runs may read, of creeds and civilisations that have passed, like shadows on a wall. Silent and secluded, wrapped in their garments of departed greatness, they stand, to the outward eye steadfast and unchanged, looking out on a troubled world of unfamiliar things and alien ways. Ten years ago, all three were the habitations of Emperors, sacred spots from whose mysterious depths issued the Edicts, whereat men trembled and obeyed. To-day, the Son of Heaven and the Lord of the Morning Calm have gone their ways, to join the mournful company of Kings in exile. Only His Majesty of Tokyo remains, a dim, mysterious figure in the medieval seclusion of Chiyoda, a picturesque survival of old Japan, like an idol in a shrine, a living Buddha, in the great new city throbbing with machinery.

As I think of these three Palaces, and of what each has stood for in the mighty past, it seems to me that, in their recent history and their present fate, we have an epitome of the whole tragedy (for tragedy it is) of the violation by the West of the East's immemorial seclusion. Also these grim sermons in stone speak of the wisdom of Dai Nippon, the nation that put oil into its lamp and learned in time the Western way of man-killing by machinery.

[1] Originally published in *Asia* (New York).



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For if the Forbidden Cities of Peking and Seoul are now open to the public (on presentation of a card), is it not because their rulers and wise men honestly believed (like Mr. Wilson) that reason is superior to force and that violence is an argument fit only for malefactors? Even after the wars of 1842 and 1860, when the citizens of Peking had seen the hosts of the invaders encamped on the Anting plain and watched the smoke of the looted Summer Palace rising to Heaven, Japan alone of all the Eastern nations took the lesson to heart and proceeded to put on the whole armour of materialism. China, panoplied in the invincible superiority of her ancient reverences and beliefs, heard the legions thunder by and turned again to sleep. And to-day, when the Manchus' little day is done and the kingdom has been taken from them by reason of their impotence, the Dragon Throne at Peking remains empty because Japan has willed it so—to this the shade of Yuan Shih-k'ai bears witness at the Seven Springs. This Palace of Peking which, within the memory of man, has held the vassal East in fee, levying homage and tribute from Annam, Tibet, and Korea, and all the "lesser breeds without the law," is now little better than an appanage of Tokyo—Tokyo the once despised, whose worldly-wise rulers have stooped for years to conquer. Had there been no coming of the West, with its missionaries, modern artillery, and money to lend, the passing of the Manchus would have meant no more to the Middle Kingdom than a summer day's shower. But where, in all this wind-fed Republic, is the Man of Destiny who shall restore the glory that was once Cathay, who shall save the Great Inheritance from the hands of alien mortgagees?

It was all, of course, inevitable. In the bustling workaday world-of-things-as-they-are, there is no place for meditation, no room for the Canons of the Sages, or the dreamers of ancient dreams. Say what you will, the be-all and the end-all of the West in the East is trade, all-devouring trade, which has no traffic with philosophy.

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For what more do they amount to, all our boasts of progress, all our labours for the advancement of Western civilisation, than a claim to disturb the lives of a simple-hearted people with ideas which, being Oriental, they distrust, and with machinery which, being elemental, they dislike? It is our pleasure and our pride to move through life much faster and with far more noise than the Chinese have ever done or desired to do; we have perfected mechanical devices by which, if we so choose, we can reduce them to slavery or the cemetery; but do these things justify the West in claiming for its civilisation, as compared with that of the East, any real superiority—any superiority, in fact, other than that which a soulless machine has over a man? I think not. I believe that the feelings with which every one of us regards these splendid monuments of earth's most venerable civilisation are evidence of the instinctive reverence which our triumphant materialism pays to the intellectual and moral superiority of the East. For what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? And the soul of the East, deep-rooted in the philosophy of the Sages, keeps its own wise counsel, undismayed, though its high places be filled with the clamour of the barbarian. They have survived many invasions of barbarism, these passive sons of Han, but no alien rule has ever changed their unperturbed attitude toward life and death, their valuation of the things that matter. And so, though a gaudy five-coloured flag floats above the yellow roof where the Empress-Dowager reigned, majestic to the end, and though the rulers of the Republic are busy selling the remainder of their birthright for whatever it may fetch, there is comfort of a kind to be found in these time-mellowed roofs and in the steadfast walls of Kublai Khan that gird the Forbidden City.

Yes, there is comfort in the sight and thought of them, because they stand for the very soul of the East, for many beautiful and venerable things which wither and wane

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in our machine-made world; the dignity and grace of splendid ceremonial, of solemn rites conceived and carried out, through countless years, in a spirit of simple reverence which touches the sublime. I like to believe that the memory of these things, and the love of them, will remain as deep-rooted in the life of the Chinese people as ancestor-worship itself; for is not the Throne, with all its stately ritual, the essential crown and climax of the Confucian philosophy? For a little while these men, who call themselves Republicans, may be lured from the Way of wisdom by fear, favour, or greed; for a little while they may be content to see earth's most beautiful song without words, the Temple of Heaven, abandoned to sordid uses or neglect; they may see fit to wear frock-coats and top hats, instead of the most dignified and decorative garments ever devised by man; but surely before long they —or others in their place—will be compelled to restore the ancient faith, the ancient ways. Is it not known to every tea-house in the North, that all the "big men" of the Republic, including the President himself, pledged themselves three years ago to restore the Dragon Throne and to set the boy Hsüan Tung upon it? It is not possible that China's Older Statesmen, men like Hsü Shih-chang, Wu Ting-fang, and Liang Shih-yi, should be content for long to see the imperishable traditions of Cathay replaced by the antics and indignities of a horde of carpet-baggers and intellectual half-breeds.

If they now suffer these indignities, it is because the present-day mandarins, like the Manchus, are an effeminate and timid breed; one seeks in vain amongst them for one stout-hearted leader of the type of Tso Tsung-tang or Admiral Ting. They are afraid of the students, afraid of the soldiers, afraid of their own shadows; above all, afraid of sudden tumults and alarms, which might mean the loss of their close-hoarded wealth. But the man and the hour will surely come; and the world will then remember that it was by the will of the Emperor of China that the Republic came into being, and that

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PEKING: THE ENTRANCE TO A *TAJENS* RESIDENCE.

IN THE ONCE-FORBIDDEN CITY, PEKING.

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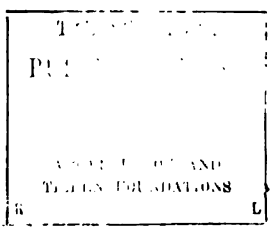


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he who gives may take away. His Majesty Hsüan Tung, as a matter of historical fact, is still the Son of Heaven. As Emperor, he has decreed that the form of government in China shall be a "Constitutional Republic, to comfort the longing of all within the Empire and to act in harmony with the ancient Sages, who regarded the Throne as a public heritage."

Go where you will in China, speak with all sorts and conditions of men, and everywhere they will tell you that under the sham Republic things have been much worse for the common people than ever they were under the Manchus. Even the hireling journalists, who have helped to nourish Young China's fantastic delusions and to encourage their self-seeking ambitions, are beginning to admit that only the restoration of a strong Central Government, under such a constitutional monarchy as was proposed in 1898 by his unfortunate Majesty Kuang Hsü, can bring back order and prosperity to China.

Wise men, like Sir Robert Hart, Prince Ito, and Yuan Shih-k'ai, knew this and predicted the anarchy that must follow the attempt to establish a Republic. And it was Yuan, past-master of Oriental statecraft, who, when the game was up in 1912, arranged for an "abdication" of the Emperor, under conditions that left him the Imperial title and his residence in the Imperial City, with a liberal pension and all the ceremonial and religious observances of his dynasty. In the profound seclusion of his palace, in sight of the Presidential Mansion, Hsüan Tung maintains the unbroken continuity of ancient traditions and all the elaborate etiquette of his diminished court, at the same time keeping up dignified (and, in certain quarters, intimate) relations with the Republican authorities. Every Chinese official fully appreciates the statecraft which has prompted this maintenance of the Throne behind the power, and of the deferential attitude which even the parliamentarians pay to His Majesty *en retraite*. And every shopkeeper of the capital keeps his Dragon flag carefully folded away, against the day when the

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Son of Heaven shall return in splendour to his Great Inheritance.

Meanwhile, for good or evil, the West has left its mark upon and around the Forbidden City. They have cut great holes in the Chien Mên wall and the "stupid people" make free of the *Via Sacra*, the straight and royal road which runs from the heart of the Imperial enclosure to the Temple of Heaven. Cook's tourists, in motor-cars, now raise the dust in places where in former days no foreigner might pass. The picturesque old Peking cart and the palanquin have almost disappeared from the main streets; to-day, ministers of State and wealthy men drive in their limousines, where twenty years ago they sat behind fat Szechuan mules, protected from the mud in covered carts. You can even motor on a good metalled road to the Western Hills, by way of the Summer Palace; if rumour lie not, more than one dignitary of the new régime repairs thither for week-end joy-rides with Dulcinea-up-to-date. Thousands of jin-rickshas, public and private, crowd the new thoroughfares; these, and Chu Chi-chien's stolid police, are conspicuous amongst the outward and visible signs of change. But the camel and the donkey still bear their modest share of the traffic, and the general appearance of the city, beyond the small area in which foreign-style houses have been built, is much the same as it was in the days of the Manchus. At dusk, in all the smaller *hu-tung* off the main streets, the shrill cries and pipings of innumerable hawkers and pedlars blend in an old-time evensong that seems to speak of lives deep-rooted in ancestral ways—a sort of vocal incense to the past.

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There are motor-cars also in Seoul, and if you are a distinguished visitor, you will be personally conducted and admitted to the precincts of that which, ten years ago, was the Palace of the Emperor of Korea, and most of which is now the area of the Government General Museum. They will show you, also, the present palace

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of Prince Yi, with its audience-room marvellously furnished with priceless embroidered screens and German gas-stoves, Prince Yi, whose helpless Hermit Kingdom has been taken away from him, and replaced by a lieutenancy in the Japanese Army. But they have left him his beautiful palace pleasaunce, a very delectable retreat for any king in exile, with its classic pavilions and dainty summer-houses nestling in the heart of the wood, a spot most suitable either for meditating on the vanity of human ambitions or for sporting with Amaryllis in the shade. Sad but stately, very dignified in adversity, is this old Imperial city of Seoul, which its Japanese masters call Keijo. Its ancient palaces are very cousins to those of Peking, with their massive curved roofs and the huge lacquered pillars that remind one of the great cedars of Lebanon, with which Solomon builded the Temple. The large central Audience Hall, with the decaying water-garden behind it, stands open to the winds of heaven; the dust lies thick upon its pillared terraces and painted ceilings. It looks out upon all the brand-new trappings with which Japan has decked the hill-girt city—the wide, paved roads, banks, hospitals and barracks, the railway and hotels. It looks out, too, upon the winding mountain way, by which for centuries the tribute-bearing envoys and their caravans started on the journey to Peking. And all about the Imperial enclosure are little clusters and alley-ways of mean mud huts, the homes of old Korea, abjectly ineffective, yet possessed of that quality of philosophic dignity which distinguishes the humblest of these hewers of wood and drawers of water. It must look far back into the past, this palace of the Hermit Kingdom, to catch a glimpse of the days of Korea's pride of art and learning; all its living memories are those of a people that has been content with vassaldom, willing to pay tribute as the price of protection. The Land of the Morning Calm has paid for centuries the price of listless lotus-eating; its empty, silent Audience Hall represents the last scene in a drama

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of inevitable destiny. But how many scenes of battle, murder, and sudden death have been enacted around and within these grim old walls, before "the shuttlecock among the nations" came to its pitiful end?

Because of the far-sighted statecraft of Prince Ito—who took the young Prince Yi as a boy of nine to be educated in Japan—the present rulers of Korea have gilded the pill of "assimilation" for him whose father was an Emperor. They have left him the outward and visible signs of semi-royal state and have given "face" to many of the old Korean nobility—as useless a lot of hereditary wasters as ever battened on a miserable peasantry. They are marrying His Royal Highness to a daughter of the Japanese Prince Nashimoto, the idea being to set an example of harmonious fusion, and thus to counteract the agitation of the mission-taught students and other exponents of the principle of "self-determination." One hears all sorts of stories about this strategic marriage. Very different is the tale they tell you in Seoul from that which you get at Tokyo.

Most Japanese will tell you that, in giving Prince Yi one of the most beautiful and high-born ladies of Japan to wed, the Japanese Government is doing its best to atone for the errors and offences committed by the Military Party in Korea; that the marriage is, in fact, part and parcel of the policy of conciliatory Liberalism, which aims at making the Koreans capable and contented citizens of the Empire, with equal rights and representation. They point to the fact that the administration of the country is now in the hands of progressive and broad-minded civilians and that the condition of the people, infinitely better than ever it was under the old régime, is steadily improving; both of which facts are undeniable. When the Koreans get the measures of local self-government which have been promised them and full representation in the Imperial Diet, the cry of "self-determination" will have nothing behind it but the professional agitator and the mushy sentimentalist, who is always for the under-dog, no matter how he got there.

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There are some very sympathetic sentimentalists in Seoul—missionaries, for the most part, who were unofficial advisers of royalty in the old days, and elderly ladies, who regret the dead old Emperor and his comic-opera Court, "where every one was somebody, and no one anybody." These dear people wax very eloquent over Korea's lost independence, and pray for American intervention, but they forget that when Japan drove first China and then Russia from Korea, by force of arms, the whole business might have been in another planet, so far as the Koreans were concerned. Also, that America was all in sympathy with Japan at the time of her war with Russia, and President Roosevelt a strong supporter of her claim to paramount influence in Korea.

But to return to the Prince's marriage. They will tell you in Seoul that he was betrothed in childhood to a Korean girl of noble family, and that to force him into another marriage was an act of barbarous tyranny. Also that his wedding to the Japanese Princess was to have taken place on the twenty-fifth of January, 1919, but that it had to be postponed because, a few days before the event, his father, the ex-Emperor, committed suicide, and the father of his native-born betrothed did the same. It is quite possible that these stories are true; but as the young Prince himself has been brought up in Japan since he was nine, and cannot possibly have any deep attachment for any Korean lady, it seems absurd to attempt to justify political agitation in this matter on sentimental grounds. Politically speaking, the best, in fact the only, solution of the Korean question lies in peaceful assimilation; and thus regarded, the marriage of Prince Yi to the Princess Nashimoto is evidently justifiable on grounds of expediency. If the ex-Emperor of Korea were of the type which commits suicide on a point of dignity or honour (which I doubt), the time for him to have done it, with real effect, was when the Japanese compelled him to sign the Treaty of Annexation in August 1910. What sense could there be in his

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objecting to the marriage of his son to a Japanese princess, after he had signed such a clause as this: "H.M. the Emperor of Japan and H.M. the Emperor of Korea, having in view the special and close relations between their respective countries, desiring to promote the common weal of the two nations, and to assure permanent peace in the extreme East, and being convinced that these objects can best be attained by the annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan, have resolved to conclude a treaty of such annexation"?

The pity 'tis, but true, that the Palace of the Kings of Korea is not likely ever again to be anything but a melancholy monument to the departed greatness, the splendid isolation, of the East; a spot where tourists may moralise, very comfortably, on the destinies of nations and the presence of flies in the ointment of self-determination. The doom of its independent Throne was sealed when the restless Powers of the West, seeking new worlds to conquer, sent their first heralds, with battleships and Bibles, to bid the East awake and gird itself to trade. And if it be true that a live dog is better than a dead lion, then the destiny of His Highness Prince Yi is more fortunate than that of most of his ancestors; for history shows that the Koreans, like the Japanese, have shown but little respect for their monarchs and suffered very few of them to die covered with years and honour.

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Now, from the palaces of monarchs dethroned, let us turn to that which to me is more beautiful, and in some ways more interesting than either, the Palace of his Sacrosanct Majesty, the Mikado of Japan. Indeed, I know of no spot on earth which carries the same appeal to the imagination and the historic sense, as this medieval enclosure of the Chiyoda Palace, with its triple moats and majestic, cedar-crowned walls, at the very heart of the modernised city of Tokyo. It is as if the spirit of the ancient East werehere invulnerably entrenched, a treasure-house and stronghold of Asian mystery, protected by

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invisible hands against a world of impious change. Far more profound than the aloofness of Peking's Forbidden City under the Manchus, is the mystic seclusion with which the makers of modern Japan have surrounded "the descendant of Jimmu Tenno, who was the grandson of the Sun Goddess, who can do no wrong."

These moats and walls tell their own story of the old feudal days and of the Tokugawa Shogunate, that held the Dragon Throne in custody. To the passer-by, the voice of the wind in these cedars sings brave tales of old Japan, of chivalry and beauty and romance, like to the tales of the minstrels at the Kabuki Theatre, beloved of the people. But to him who understands, they sing also of Elder Statesmen and of the craft of king-making. For this semi-divinity, with which the Clansmen, who rule Japan, have seen fit to invest their Sovereign since the Restoration of 1868, this Emperor-worship, which in fifty years has taken so firm a hold upon the masses, is undoubtedly part and parcel of a skilful official propaganda of Imperialism. Prince Ito and the Elder Statesmen, who brought their country safely through many perils, realised that they must devise a new rallying-point for loyalty and patriotism, and they found it in Mikadoism, Emperor worship, the dominating force of modern Japan. The bureaucracy of the Clans has exalted Mikadoism and made it a popular religion, with very definite political ends in view, chief of which is, that the mystic oracle shall always express itself as the Clans think fit. When a Minister of State proclaims "that the majesty of our Imperial House towers high above everything to be found in the world, as durable as heaven and earth," he proclaims also, for all who have ears to hear, the fact that those who, as delegates of the Throne, represent its omniscience, can do no wrong. And so this Chiyoda Palace, this lovely dream enshrined in rough-hewn stone, stands firm amidst a world of change, a splendid casket for the mystic Throne, worshipped from afar. In its precincts inviolate dwells the Sacred Presence which sits

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upon that Throne, he who reigns but does not rule, the consecrated puppet of Mikadoism; and all about these grim old walls, close to the moat and glacis slopes, where the wild duck sleep in the sun, the life of modern Tokyo storms and frets, with its noisy hooting of motor-horns and rumbling of heavy-laden trams. Within sight of its guard-towers and bastions are the Western-style buildings of the Diet, all the Government offices, hotels, and banks of the new dispensation, and the pretentious villas of the new plutocracy. But from its silent and mysterious depths, as from a Delphic oracle, still issue the Imperial Rescripts before which the Diet bows its head and the voice of the people is stilled, those ordinances in which the will of the Elder Statesmen cloaks itself in the sanctity of the Imperial Ancestors. To make and to keep these Edicts majestically impressive, to maintain their authority as a power above that of the law, the Clansmen in their wisdom have always surrounded this shrine of the national Deity with an atmosphere of impenetrable mystery, and kept its sanctuary inviolate. They know that, shorn of its mysteries, Mikadoism as a religion and an incentive to patriotism would lose most of its appeal to the masses.

Therefore, in spite of the enterprising activity of the Japanese Press and the natural curiosity of the diplomatic world in Tokyo, very little is known of the daily life of the Inner Court at the Chiyoda Palace. A small book published in 1912, *The Memoirs of a Lady-in-Waiting*, gave an interesting description of the rigid etiquette imposed on all who live, move, and have their being near the Presence; but it was promptly suppressed as *lèse majesté* by the ever-vigilant authorities. Since then several newspapers have been punished by the police for attempting to throw light on the manners and customs of the Court.

But enough has been told, by the "Lady-in-Waiting" and by others, to show that life in the Inner Court of the Chiyoda Palace bears a remarkable resemblance to

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that of the old Court of China. The amusements, accomplishments, and religious observances of the Court ladies are in many ways curiously like those of the Forbidden City in Peking under the Empress-Dowager, as described by the Princess Derling. All these ladies are the daughters of the old Kugé, or court nobles, of Kyoto, and they maintain in the life of the Palace not only the Kyoto dialect, but all the old-world, dreamy atmosphere of that ancient centre of Japanese culture and religion, as impervious to the influence of Western civilisation as the Dalai Lama or the Grand Mogul. With the exception of a few youths, who act as pages and messengers between the Outer and the Inner Courts, society within the sacred precincts consists entirely of women. In former days His Majesty was entitled to twelve lawful wives and concubines, *à discrétion*, but since the passing of the Imperial House Law in 1889, the Empress is his only lawful spouse. The political influence wielded by many of the Court ladies, and especially by the first lady-in-waiting (mother of the present Emperor), bears a certain resemblance to that which the eunuchs wielded under the later Manchus at the Court of Peking. As in the case of the eunuchs, their hot-house lives have always been closely confined within the Palace walls, their knowledge of the outside world has been practically nil, and their minds, therefore, naturally prone to constant intriguing for power and rights of patronage against the Chamberlains and Ministers of the Household. And behind the thirty ladies-in-waiting, there are the rank and file of female Palace attendants, some three hundred, all of Kyoto stock—quite sufficient to keep any conscientious Chamberlain on the *qui vive*.

The education of the present Emperor was taken out of the hands of the Palace Ladies by his father, when he was eight years old and entrusted to Count Hijikata, a Minister who had long been the avowed enemy of petticoat influence and who had fought several losing battles with the veteran Lady Takahira, far famed for her ready



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tongue. The present Emperor and his consort are thus, by education, much less rigidly conservative in many ways than His Late Majesty Mutsuhito. Nevertheless, the Inner Court remains strictly native in its architecture, equipment, and ways of life, a little oasis of old Japan, serenely undisturbed by the bustle of Western civilisation, faithful to the teachings and traditions of the past.

I like to think that this kernel of conservatism at the very heart of Japan's national life, this little stronghold of stability amidst tempestuous seas of modern materialism, represents something of instinctive wisdom, something more than political expediency, on the part of the Elder Statesmen. I like to think of this moated Palace as the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, as a symbol of the steadfast soul of the East, a sign that it is destined to endure, untarnished and unchanged, long after Europe has forgotten most of its present-day inventions. From the noisy tram-cars, and crowds uncouthly clad in hideous alien clothes, I look gratefully towards those cedar-crowned walls, and, with the eye of faith, I see the Soul of the East emerging once again, triumphantly serene, as it has so often done before, from perils of change. In this vision, the Three Palaces speak with one voice, but that of Tokyo strikes a more hopeful note than either Peking or Seoul, because of the virile energy of the Japanese people, which has enabled them to wrest from the armouries and laboratories of the West the secrets of its material strength, and at the same time to preserve their reverence for the deep-rooted wisdom, the immemorial usage, of the East. In this, my vision, the East comes once more into its own, and I descry, ages hence, a Confucianist Sage pondering, like Macaulay's New Zealander amidst the ruins of London, on the rise and fall of a material civilisation in which there was no place for philosophy.

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